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# **The Barnes English Texts**

**GENERAL EDITOR**

**EDWIN FAIRLEY**

**HEAD OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, JAMAICA HIGH SCHOOL,  
NEW YORK CITY**

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The Barnes English Texts

# THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

By WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

EDITED BY

CHARLES ROBERT GASTON, PH.D.

HEAD OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, RICHMOND HILL HIGH  
SCHOOL, NEW YORK CITY



NEW YORK  
THE A. S. BARNES COMPANY  
1914

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## PREFATORY NOTE

IN the preparation of this edition of a Shakespearian play, the editor has had constantly in mind the reading of the play as a play. Shakespeare meant that his audiences should have some rollicking fun out of *The Merchant of Venice*. It would be a shame for boys and girls to read the play in school without feeling something of the spirit of fun in the comedy. Hence, in the introductory material and in the comments, topics, and questions at the back of the book there is nothing that ought to take the pupil's mind away from the great, outstanding point that *The Merchant of Venice* is a good lively comedy to be enjoyed today as well as it was enjoyed by the happy Elizabethan audiences.

The editor wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the Variorum edition of Furness and to the useful suggestions given to him by his wife during the preparation of the present edition.





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## WHO WAS SHAKESPEARE?

THERE are so many conflicting views about Shakespeare that the average person frequently asks the question, Who was Shakespeare? The answer can be briefly given. His birthplace was Stratford-on-Avon, and he was born in 1564. The register in the Stratford parish church shows that William Shakespeare was baptized there in April of that year. His mother was Mary Arden, daughter of a well-to-do farmer. His father was a prosperous man who became head alderman of Stratford when his son was seven years old, but who later failed in business. The birth-house, still standing and preserved as a museum for Shakespeare relics, was a substantial, half-timbered structure better than the usual run of English country-town homes. William Shakespeare had a distinctly better send-off than most of the boys of his town.

In his youth he went to the Stratford grammar school, where he obtained the foundations for further reading. He very likely studied Latin in the grammar school, for that was one of the usual subjects, and possibly he studied Greek. Somewhere he learned a little French. He became so much interested in reading that he did a good deal of it during his life, as his method of work which is presently to be explained clearly indicates.

When strolling players or regular companies of actors came to Stratford at the invitation of the town council, young Shakespeare was not the last among the lads of the town to defy the Puritan sentiment of the day and go and revel in the plays presented. It is not certain precisely what it was that sent Shakespeare to London by and by to earn his living. It may have been a desire to go on the stage. It may have been the urgent necessity of providing as well as possible for his wife and three children. It may have been merely the lure of the big city to the young man from the country town. At any rate, Shakespeare made the

hundred mile journey to London about 1586, and began working around the theater at odd jobs. He boarded with a French family, the Mountjoys, whose name is remembered now only because of their having had as a lodger a man who became one of the greatest of authors. Plays were given then on the south bank of the Thames, outside the city limits, owing to the state of feeling on the subject of playgoing. Shakespeare joined Lord Leicester's company of players, first as an under-study and then as a regular actor.

Soon he was composing plays himself. There was a steady demand for plays, since audiences insisted on novelties. Two or three weeks sufficed to tire the audiences of almost every play presented, and something new was constantly sought for. Shakespeare began to satisfy the demand by re-furbishing old plays and gained considerable skill as a practical playwright. He would take, too, a book that he had read and that he found to have some dramatic idea in it and work the book over into a good play. For instance, he did this with a tiresome novel, "Rosalynde," and made a beautiful little comedy, *As You Like It*. He did it also with North's translation of Plutarch's lives of famous Romans and made the stirring, full-blooded tragedy of *Julius Cæsar*. When he was about thirty years old, he did this sort of thing supremely well when he produced *The Merchant of Venice*. In this he combined an old English ballad, a play that has since been lost, and a translated Italian novel into one artistic comedy.

Some of his plays, as *The Merchant of Venice*, were published during the life of their author, but most of them did not appear in print till after his death. *The Merchant of Venice* was first printed in 1600. As men who wrote plays did not consider publication worth while, publishers sometimes obtained the words of popular plays from actors who had learned the lines or from manuscript copies used by companies in their rehearsals of the plays. A printer named James Robertes first published *The Merchant of Venice*. It is considered probable that he had as the basis for the text



of his edition, which is known as the First Quarto, a manuscript written by Shakespeare himself.

Shakespeare was a convivial spirit, enjoying meetings with his friends in the London taverns. His plays abound in realistic pictures of scenes with which he became familiar while he was spending his time in talk and song at the taverns. Here he acquired knowledge of all kinds of human characteristics and people. There was a perfect swarm of enthusiastic young dramatists who frequented the London inns. Among Shakespeare's boon companions were some of the most popular playwrights of the time, like Christopher Marlowe, the best known of all. As a step beyond writing plays Shakespeare became part owner of a theater and made what was considered a fortune in those days.

His relations with his family during this time are not entirely clear. While he was prospering in London, he provided for his family in Stratford, and his wife and children he appears to have visited at infrequent intervals. His son died in 1596; his father, in 1601. In 1597 Shakespeare bought a pretentious estate in Stratford, which he leased for a term of years; he did not move there himself till four years before his death. He was looked up to as one of the important personages of his native city, and secured a coat of arms for his family.

In 1616, on April 23, his birthday, he died, leaving in Stratford a good many people who loved him well, in London a number of friends who respected his powers and had affectionate regard for him, and in England a larger body of people who had heard of the playwright and actor manager, William Shakespeare. It was not until years after his death that his reputation became world-wide.

How can we account for Shakespeare's having been able to write his great plays? The answer is a little complicated. We often ask how some great person was able to accomplish some great deed and find it difficult to give a direct answer. There are usually combinations of circumstances that make the great work possible. In Shakespeare's case a number of facts help us to come to some sort of understand-

ing as to how he did what he did. He had a good start in a good town and came from good stock. He had enough schooling to want to learn things by reading. He had enough adversity to call out his best powers. He met enough people to get insight into all kinds of life; he certainly knew hosts of folks. He knocked around in the big city enough to realize how immensely diversified and yet how fundamentally simple human nature is. He had practical apprenticeship in the theater. He learned just what people liked, and he had an extraordinary knack in giving it to them. He worked prodigiously, yet he had plenty of time for relaxation in social companionship. His craftsmanship or skill as a literary and dramatic workman came as a result of his steady, long-continued work. His technical excellence might not have given him fame, but sweeping through all his work and making it all permanently valuable was his grasp of human nature; it was this power of understanding people that made his work of abiding value. He charted human nature, like a man making a map of the world. This he was able to do because of his range of acquaintance, his sympathy with the high and the low, the rich and the poor, noblemen and commoners. He is as fresh today as when his plays were first acted. We account for his lasting quality by saying that he was a real, big-hearted, companionable human being—and that he was a genius. He had the magic power of changing commonplace or generally known stories into universally appreciated plays abounding in lifelike characters.

## THE MERCHANT OF VENICE AS A PLAY

The word *play* hardly needs definition in these days when playgoing is the most popular indoor diversion. Almost every one knows that a play is a performance of a story by actors for the pleasure of an audience. Not all playgoers, however, know a good play from an inferior one. If the reading of *The Merchant of Venice* in school will cultivate in boys and girls a taste for what is good in drama,

surely the time spent will be fruitful. There is hardly any one so benighted as not to desire an appreciation of the best things in the world. The gaining of a taste for what are the best things in literature and art and music is one of the most valuable results of education. Good plays are not like olives, which some people can never acquire a taste for; a taste for good plays comes easily. After reading a play like *The Merchant of Venice*, students should have fairly well defined ideas of what are good plays and what are inferior plays.

Some playgoers are not familiar with the technical distinction between comedy and tragedy as special varieties of dramatic performances. A comedy comes out happily, a tragedy ends in misfortune. There are smiles in comedies, tears in tragedies. A comedy abounds in humorous talk and comical situations; a tragedy contains wise and solemn sentiments and terrifying, gloom-producing situations. The general air of one is bright and cheery, of the other dark and sorrowful. Yet each may be splashed a little with the qualities of the other, for the sake of contrast. In a comedy things may look serious for the hero, but he is able to buffet aside his troubles and ride the waves to a happy ending. In tragedy, scenes of drunken humor or witty remarks here and there may lend emphasis to the prevailing despair which engulfs the hero in the end when he is borne down by the circumstances which he cannot control.

*The Merchant of Venice* is a comedy. When Shakespeare wrote the play he wanted a theme that would appeal to his audience as humorous. He wanted somebody to hold up on the center of the stage for ridicule. If he had been writing in our day he might have taken an Irishman, for Irishmen have long been centers for amusement on the modern stage. Or he might have taken a colored man and had him open his mouth wide and show his red lips and white teeth and seem funny. He might have taken a farmer and had the audience laugh at his discomfiture when some one sold him a gold brick. Instead, he took a Jew and held him

up to ridicule. This is not any indictment of Jews in general, and people who read the play now do not so take it. In fact some of the most celebrated actors make out Shakespeare's great comic character, Shylock, to be more sinned against than sinning. They make the audience sympathize with Shylock; they smooth out with a sort of spiritualized interpretation the rough comedy element which Shakespeare intended to put into his characterization of Shylock.

The fact is that there was in London about the end of the sixteenth century a strong feeling against Jews. Marlowe had won success with his tragic drama, *The Jew of Malta*, with which Shakespeare was familiar. Moreover, a certain Jewish physician had roused the hatred of the populace by attempting to poison Queen Elizabeth. It is extremely probable that Shakespeare brought out his *Merchant of Venice* when he did, in order that he might take advantage of a feeling of the day and have large and satisfied audiences. The rough characterization of Shylock, then, is to be taken as just the sort of thing that a dramatist with his ear to the ground would do now; it is not an insult to Jews of today in any sense. Nowhere in the world are people of that race more protected than in the English-speaking nations. Shakespeare merely put his comedy on the stage at the time when he did and of the kind that he chose, in order to appeal to the taste, feelings, and prejudices of the end of the sixteenth century in London. Authors of the early, crude religious plays had made Judas or the Devil the comic hero; Shakespeare held Shylock similarly up to ridicule, for Shakespeare knew that his audience would relish the comic characterization.

In Shakespeare's comedy of *The Merchant of Venice* are blended two main stories or plots which are intertwined with each other and with an interesting little romantic subordinate story. Remember—*plot* means pith of a story. In the study of literature, plot does not necessarily mean some attempt to take a person's life or steal his property or overthrow his government, though plots of stories some-



times cover such actions as these. The plot of a play is the main series of happenings. *The Merchant of Venice* contains two main series or plots. The title-page of one of the early editions of the play, the Second Quarto published in 1600, suggests the two main plots. Here is the title-page, the vertical lines marking what were ends of lines as the title-page was originally printed:

The most excellent | Historie of the Merchant | of Venice | With  
the extreame.crueltie of Shylocke the Jewe | towards the sayd Mer-  
chant, in cutting a just pound | of his flesh: and the obtayning of  
Portia | by the choyse of three chests. | As it hath beene divers  
times acted by the Lord | Chamberlaine his Servants. | Written  
by William Shakespeare. | At London, | Printed by I. R. for Thomas  
Heyes † and are to be sold in Paules Church-yard, at the | signe of  
the Greene Dragon. | 1600. |

The first main plot is the one centering around the attempt of the Jewish money lender, Shylock, to obtain a pound of the flesh of his business rival, the merchant of Venice, Antonio. Antonio, in order to accommodate his friend Bassanio, who desires money to go to Belmont to court a beautiful heiress named Portia, borrows a sum of money from Shylock.<sup>bv</sup> As Antonio thinks his ships will be in port long before the expiration of the three months for which he borrows the money, he signs a bond giving Shylock the right to cut off a pound of flesh from Antonio if the loan is not repaid on time. Shylock pretends to make the condition merely in sport, but he really hopes to get revenge on Antonio for lending money without interest and for spitting on Shylock and generally abusing him. When the time comes, Antonio has not the money to pay, and Shylock demands his pound of flesh. He is foiled through the legal interpretation of Portia, who impersonates a lawyer. Shylock has to agree to become a Christian, to give half his property to Antonio to use for Shylock's son-in-law, and has to agree to make a deed giving to his daughter and his son-in-law all the property that he shall be possessed of at his death. In this main plot are included a number of less important characters, like



Gratiano, who tries to cheer up the serious-minded Antonio, but these minor characters and happenings need not be included in a summary of the first main plot. This story may be called the Antonio-Shylock story, or the bond story.

The second main story centers around Bassanio and Portia. Bassanio, with the money secured by Antonio from Shylock, fits out his retinue and goes to Belmont, not far from Venice, there to try to win the heiress Portia as his wife. He is successful in choosing the one of the three chests or caskets which contains Portia's picture and so by the terms of her father's will he marries her. As she loves him anyway, the choice of the caskets has proved doubly fortunate. Gratiano, a friend of Bassanio and Antonio, gains permission to marry Nerissa, the lady attendant upon Portia. While the company are rejoicing at Belmont, news comes of Antonio's plight. Bassanio hurries off to do what he can, but his efforts seem vain. Portia has followed her husband, disguising herself as a lawyer. Receiving instructions from a learned jurist, she is able to save Antonio from Shylock's revenge. After the trial is over she returns to Belmont, where she is soon joined by Bassanio and Gratiano. This main story is known as the Bassanio-Portia story. It also includes in its action several characters not named in the above summary, and obviously some of the characters of this casket story are important figures also in the bond story.

The romantic side story to which reference has been made has to do with the family affairs of Shylock. He has a lovely daughter, Jessica, unlike him in every respect; where he is a miser, she is a spendthrift; where he hates the Christians, she admires them and loves one of them; where he is harsh and severe, she is kind and gentle. She flees his home, taking with her some of his treasure, and marries a Christian, Lorenzo. Lorenzo and Jessica are entertained at Belmont and take care of the estate while Portia and Bassanio are trying to save Antonio in Venice.

The play is, then, a comedy, with the principal elements as mentioned in the preceding summaries. The comical talk and situations need some study. Punning is a consid-

erable part of the humor in Elizabethan plays. Attempts to play on words make up the humor in some scenes. This verbal fencing is not so much appreciated and enjoyed by modern audiences as it was by those in Shakespeare's time. Cascades of sententious talk lend a touch of gaiety to the conversation of such characters as Gratiano. There is, too, a chance for buffoonery in the play, especially in the actions of the young servant Launcelot Gobbo, who sky-larks with his blind father. The ring incident or episode is also a comical situation, affording actors a chance for fun-making by facial expression, gestures, etc.—by what is technically called stage business. Playgoers will find it entertaining to turn over in their minds after a good performance of *The Merchant of Venice* just what parts of the play made the spectators laugh and what it was about the amusing parts that made the audience think them amusing. A study of the witty remarks and the comical situations will well repay the reader of the play.

As a good play, *The Merchant of Venice* goes even ahead of Shakespeare's other comedies in its lively, interesting, and human characters. In good plays, the people seem possible, seem to show traits that we have seen in real life. Let the student of the play try to find from his own experience parallels to the persons of this Shakespearian drama. While being a good acting play, *The Merchant of Venice* has also much merit as a literary composition. Let us consider this phase of the play separately.

## THE MERCHANT OF VENICE AS LITERATURE

*The Merchant of Venice* is acknowledged to be a masterpiece of literature. It is written in both prose and poetry. The prose is excellent of its kind. Sometimes it is well balanced, formally correct. Sometimes it is informal in the extreme, even ungrammatical. But the greater part of the play is written in verse form.

The form of poetry adopted by Shakespeare for his plays, including *The Merchant of Venice*, is known as blank verse.

In this kind of verse the lines are unrhymed. That is, the end of a line has not the same sound as the end of the next or of some corresponding line. Each line contains five accented syllables. Each accented syllable is preceded by an unaccented syllable. Read the lines that follow, pronouncing the words with the accent where it ordinarily belongs in each word, and you will see what representative lines of blank verse look like and sound like:

You have too much respect upon the world:  
They lose it that do buy it with much care.

(I, 1, 74-75)

That light we see is burning in my hall.  
How far that little candle throws his beams!

(V, 1, 89-90)

The technical name for a line of poetry constructed like those just given is

*Iambic Pentameter.*

Iambic has reference to the relative position of the accented and unaccented syllables. A group consisting of an unaccented syllable followed by an accented syllable is called an iambic foot.

Pentameter has reference to the number of feet in a line. A line containing five feet is called a pentameter line.

There are in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* many variations from this standard type of line. Some of the pentameter lines show considerable change from the standard type illustrated above. Point out the variations that you discover in the following lines selected from the first act of the play. One can sometimes remove the irregularity by pronouncing the words differently from the current way of pronouncing them; for instance, accent *Portia* on the first and the last syllable, and you find one of the lines resolving itself into a regular iambic pentameter line.

Your mind is tossing on the ocean (I, 1, 8).

Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs (I, 1, 28).

Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad (I, 1, 47).

Lie all unlocked to your occasions (I, 1, 139).

To find the other forth, and by adventuring both (I, 1, 143).

To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia (I, 1, 166).

I hate him for he is a Christian (I, 3, 40).

Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow (I, 3, 59).

Is not so estimable, profitable neither (I, 3, 156).

There are some passages written in only four feet to a line, and some passages show rhyme. The writing on the scroll in the caskets, for instance, is in a different measure from the usual form of line in the play, and is in rhyme also instead of being unrhymed.

A curious effect for variety is obtained by some of the short lines of the play, such as this:

I am to learn (I, 1, 5).

Another variation comes from the starting of a line by one speaker and the taking up of the line by the next speaker so as to complete it. From parts of the speeches of two persons one pentameter line is thus produced: e.g.,

*Ant.* And mine a sad one.

*Gra* Let me play the fool.

(I, 1, 79)

Besides following, for the most part, a regular form of versification, the play abounds in groups of lines which from their contents and method of expression have appealed to lovers of poetry as showing a high order of poetic beauty. Two of these groups may be selected as examples for special comment. "The man that hath no music in himself" is a phrase sure to be appreciated when it is quoted in the editorial column of a newspaper or by some one in casual conversation. The passage from which the line is taken is very well known for its good idea and its beautiful expression. Yet in one of the allusions in it, it suggests one of the difficulties which some persons find in appreciating Shakespeare to the full.

"And his affections *dark as Erebus*."



When the dramatist speaks of the affections of a person who does not like music as being as *dark as Erebus*, he is using a classical reference which is not widely known nowadays. Similar allusions here and there make the full comprehension and appreciation of some of the most poetic passages difficult for beginners. The more one has read in classic literature, the better one can understand at first reading poetic allusions such as the one contained in Lorenzo's oft-quoted discussion on the subject of music.

More famous than the quotation just referred to is the passage that forms a turning-point in the play, the passage in which Portia, just about to pronounce judgment against Shylock, suggests to him the virtue of mercy. This speech, coming as it does just before the climax of the bond story, is in a particularly impressive position in the play; and the speech is worthy of its position. See the simple language of the selection. *Attribute* is about the hardest word in it. Listen to the rhythmic ease of the lines as you read them aloud to yourself. Observe the comparisons by which the speaker tries to make clear what the quality of mercy is. Notice, above all, the lofty tone of the sentiment. In "John Halifax," a character of the story preaches a sermon on the sentence,

"It is twice blest;  
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:  
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest."

Altogether from its language and central idea, the "quality of mercy" speech has unquestioned claims to the popularity which it enjoys.

These two selections are merely examples illustrating the poetic beauty which the discerning will enjoy here and there in *The Merchant of Venice*.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASS DRAMATIZATION

No reading of *The Merchant of Venice* by a wide-awake class would be complete without some sort of dramatization of the play. In some cases the crudest sort of presen-



tation of short scenes may be all that can reasonably be expected from the class. For example, the day before a meeting of the class the teacher may ask Mary Smith to be Portia and John Jones to be Morocco, and then when the class meets these two persons of the drama may read the first scene of the second act with their books open. If the teacher has had time to discover any latent dramatic ability, she may ask a particularly clever young fellow to try the part of Launcelot and another the part of Gobbo in the second scene of the second act. This will pass off fairly well with even a poor reading, but will be relished hugely if presented from memory by two lively boys standing in front of the class. If the class consists of all girls or all boys, the dramatization will be possible nevertheless, for it is well known that in the women's colleges successful performances of Shakespearian plays are given by the young women and in Shakespeare's time the women's parts were taken by young boys. Boys and girls now are able to do the simple dramatizations here recommended.

But the best results from class dramatization usually come from some sort of volunteer presentation. Let the class organize early in the semester into a dramatic club, with regularly chosen officers or a committee, one member of which is chosen as coach. Let it be understood from the beginning that an entertainment is to be given before the end of the reading of the play, and that all details are to be in the hands of members of the class dramatic society, with the teacher as only an advisory member. Then, along toward the end of the study, instead of assigning for some day as a lesson a general review of the play, let the teacher give an assignment something like this:

*Entertainment by the Class Dramatic Society.*

As the members of the society will have been preparing for such an announcement from the very beginning of the reading of the play, the announcement will not take the class by surprise. Rehearsals will already have been held and details perfected for a simple little presentation of se-

lected portions of the play — enough to fill the period full of pleasure for the participants and the hearers. It would be futile to attempt to give more explicit suggestions than these for the dramatization, inasmuch as the brains and powers of high school pupils have been proved by experience admirably adapted to the carrying out of simple, effective dramatizations of *The Merchant of Venice*. In an appendix, one plan worked out by a class recently is given in full. The teacher, as adviser of the dramatic society of the class, will have given aid where needed for the selection of enough from the play to make a consecutive, intelligible performance. Sometimes not even so much help as this is needed by the class, because the elements of mystery and surprise and voluntariness are powerful factors in school work.

Enhanced interest in the final performance will usually be secured by a preliminary educational campaign something like this. Let the teacher try to arouse intelligent interest in Venice by securing herself or asking students to secure copies of Venetian scenes or of paintings that deal with Venice. For instance, postal card pictures of the grand canal and the Doges' Palace are readily obtainable. Copies of Venetian paintings by Turner are fairly common. If there is a local art gallery the class may very profitably be taken there to see any pictures of Venetian scenes. Millais's beautiful representation of Portia may be procurable in copy; the original is in the Metropolitan Museum, in New York City. Students may possibly be able to bring examples of Venetian glass or of Venetian inlaid stick pins, or something of the sort. Certain students may be assigned the pleasant work of finding out something about the history and geography of Venice. Some one may be able to tell a good deal about gondolas. The idea is to cultivate before the performance as wide a range of sense impressions about Venice as possible; for by the enrichment of the pupils' minds in these respects the entire lack of scenery in the class presentation will not be a hindrance at all. Rather it will give the student actors the better opportunity of creating something of a dramatic atmosphere, something of the real illusion which after

all is the fundamental sense pleasure of theatrical performances.

Again, the understanding at the beginning that there is to be a performance of selections from the play will serve as an incentive to attentive reading with the idea of mastering the pronunciation of words and the acquiring of a sense for rhythmical delivery of the blank verse. The students will all desire to be able to express intelligent judgments as to the success of the performers in rendering the lines as they ought to be rendered.

Of course, the greatest incentive of all will be to read the play with enough attention to be able to have a rational appreciation of the shadings of character. Thus the class will desire to find out what should be the best interpretation of the character of Shylock, how such minor characters as Gratiano and Lorenzo should be played, how the speeches of the clown should be presented, and what should be the mental and moral characteristics of Portia in the final presentation. With such a motive as this inspiring the work, work becomes in the nature of play.

Finally, however, a word should be said in behalf of those teachers who are conservative regarding dramatic performances. There are some teachers who feel that young people are already too prone to enjoy dramatic representations. Such teachers will undoubtedly prefer to limit class dramatization to the simple reading of selections aloud as outlined at the beginning of this section of the introduction. They will use this oral reading of the play as a means for bringing forward the backward and shy pupils who might not be reached at all with only a final, more carefully prepared and rehearsed dramatization. In such cases the aim of the teacher will be to draw out the shy and timid ones in the informal reading or speaking of the parts, as well as to arouse to their best efforts those who are more eager to get into the limelight. Thus, even without a final performance, the whole class may become thoroughly interested and excited by the stirring story contained in *The Merchant of Venice*.

## REFERENCE BOOKS

1. The VARIORUM SHAKESPEARE. *The Merchant of Venice*. Edited by Horace Howard Furness, Ph.D., LL.D., L.H.D. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1888.

This volume is indispensable for the teacher and very interesting to the pupil. The boys and girls who are interested in proper costumes, music for the songs, celebrated actors, or the feeling in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century toward Jews in England will find it delightful to browse around in the Variorum edition of the play.

2. *A Catalogue of the Dramatic Museum of Columbia University, in the City of New York.*

This pamphlet may be obtained by teachers who will write to the university for it. The prefatory note by Professor Brander Matthews is particularly valuable in giving a sane and interesting point of view for approaching the study of a drama. On page nine of the catalogue there is a description of a model of the Fortune Theater. As this theater was a reproduction of the Globe Theater for which Shakespeare wrote his plays any person who desires to see the conditions which confronted Shakespeare should visit the museum and study this model.

3. ALBRIGHT, VICTOR EMANUEL. "The Shaksperian Stage." Columbia University Press, 1909.

Though too technical for school readers, this treatise, especially chapter III, "A Typical Shaksperian Stage," will be of value to teachers. Here is an example of the sort of thing to be found:

"In certain scenes, a hanging was drawn across some part of the inner stage for the purpose of concealing some person or small object from the characters already using most of the inner stage and the outer." The application of this to Act II, Scene 7 of *The Merchant* is easily made.

4. WINTER, WILLIAM. "Shakespeare on the Stage." Moffat, Yard & Co., 1911.

5. ARCHER, WILLIAM. "About the Theatre."

Pages 239-258 treat of Shakespeare and the Public.

6. ARCHER, WILLIAM. "The Theatrical World of 1897."

A good example of modern dramatic criticism is to be seen in Mr. Archer's comments in the "World" on Mr. Ben Greet's presentation of *The Merchant of Venice* at the Olympic Theater in May and June, 1897.



7. JENKS, TUDOR. "In the Days of Shakespeare." The A. S. Barnes Company, 1905.

8. WINTER, WILLIAM. "Shakespeare's England."

9. STEPHENSON, H. T. "Shakspeare's London."

10. FLEMING, WILLIAM HANSELL. "Shakespeare's Plots: a Study in Dramatic Construction." G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1902.

The study of *The Merchant of Venice* occupies pages 137-231. The author holds that the Main Action of this drama is the wooing of Portia by Bassanio, and all the consequences thereof.

11. MOULTON, RICHARD GREEN. "Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist" and "Shakespeare as a Dramatic Thinker."

12. LEE, SIDNEY. "A Life of William Shakespeare." London, 1898.

Possibly the best biography of Shakespeare.

13. MABIE, H. W. "William Shakespeare: Poet, Dramatist and Man." The Macmillan Co., 1900.

This edition, containing one hundred illustrations, is an excellent means for making facts about Shakespeare vivid to the pupil's mind. The frontispiece is the Chandos portrait from the National Portrait Gallery (London), the most *human* picture of Shakespeare.

14. BRANDES, GEORG. "William Shakespeare: A Critical Study." English translation by William Archer. Two volumes, London, 1898.

Pages 134-140 of Vol. I give significant facts which in the opinion of the biographer show that Shakespeare visited Italy; for instance, "Of Venice, which Shakespeare has so livingly depicted, no description was published in England until after he had written his *Merchant of Venice*." Pages 178-202 give one of the best discussions of *The Merchant of Venice*, particularly with regard to the sources of the play, the contemporary attitude toward Jews, Shakespeare's knowledge of business, etc.

15. HARRIS, FRANK. "The Man Shakespeare and His Tragic Life-Story." New York, 1909.

16. RALEIGH, WALTER ALEXANDER. "Shakespeare." English Men of Letters Series. New York, 1907.

17. ROLFE, W. J. "A Life of William Shakespeare." Boston, 1904.

The third chapter contains a discussion of the free dramatic performances provided by the Stratford town council for the citizens of Stratford at the time when Shakespeare was a boy. The ninth chapter is a full treatment of Shakespeare's poems, mention of which has been omitted in the short sketch in this edition of *The Merchant*.



In the thirteenth chapter there is a good account of the opposition of the Puritans in London to the theaters established there.

18. ALEXANDER, LOUIS CHARLES. "The Autobiography of Shakespeare." Baker & Taylor Co., 1911.

A curious attempt to put into the first person facts about Shakespeare compiled by Mr. Alexander during years of study of the dramatist's life.

19. GRAY, JOSEPH WILLIAM. "Shakespeare's Marriage, His Departure from Stratford, and Other Incidents in His Life." London, 1905.

The ninth chapter is a concise summary of facts about Shakespeare's life, as shown by contemporary written documents: e.g.,

1599. The Globe Theatre was built, and Shakespeare became the owner of a share in the profits. Public Record Office.

1601. Thomas Whittington bequeathed to the poor of Stratford forty shillings "that is in the hand of Anne Shaxspere wyfe unto Mr. Wylliam Shaxspere." The will was proved at Worcester, April 29th, 1601.

20. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPS, J. O. "The Visits of Shakespeare's Company of Actors to the Provincial Cities and Towns of England," illustrated by extracts gathered from corporate records. Brighton, 1887.

This book is an example of the sort of indefatigable search that scholars have made in the last half century to find any possible scrap of information about Shakespeare. The author, Halliwell-Phillips, has been one of the most painstaking of investigators. In the forty-eight pages of this book he mentions all the visits of the Lord Chamberlain's company of actors that are referred to in the records of the corporate towns within a circuit of about forty miles of Stratford-on-Avon. As Shakespeare was the leading member of the company as early as 1594, it is probable that he accompanied his colleagues on their excursions to the country towns.

21. SMITH, GOLDWIN. "Shakespeare the Man: An Attempt to find Traces of the Dramatist's Character in His Dramas." New York, 1900.

A booklet of sixty pages in the author's customarily pungent style: e.g., "Fine music seems to have been Shakespeare's acme of enjoyment," and "Portia's success as an advocate cannot be pleaded as encouraging to ladies to enter the legal profession. It will be observed that she gets not only her garments but her notes from her cousin Doctor Bellario at Padua."

22. "Tolstoy on Shakespeare," translated by V. Tchertkoff and I. F. M. New York and London, 1906.

**THE MERCHANT OF VENICE**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE DUKE OF VENICE

THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO }  
THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON } *suitors to Portia.*

ANTONIO, *a merchant of Venice.*

BASSANIO, *friend to Antonio, suitor likewise to Portia.*

SALANTIO }  
SALARINO } *friends to Antonio and Bassanio.*  
GRATIANO }

LORENZO, *in love with Jessica.*

SHYLOCK, *a rich Jew.*

TUBAL, *a Jew, friend to Shylock.*

SALERIO, *a messenger.*

LAUNCELOT GOBBO, *a Clown, servant to Shylock.*

Old GOBBO, *father to Launcelot.*

LEONARDO, *servant to Bassanio.*

BALTHAZAR }  
STEPHANO } *servants to Portia.*

PORTIA, *a rich Italian lady.*

NERISSA, *her waiting-gentlewoman.*

JESSICA, *daughter to Shylock.*

*Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Gaoler,  
Servants, and other Attendants.*

SCENE — *Partly at VENICE; and partly at BELMONT, the seat of  
Portia, on the Continent.*

# THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

## ACT I

### SCENE I

*Venice. A street.*

*Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, and SALANIO.*

*Antonio.* In sooth, I know not why I am so sad:

It wearies me; you say it wearies you;  
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,  
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,  
I am to learn;

And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,  
That I have much ado to know myself.

*Salarino.* Your mind is tossing on the ocean;  
There, where your argosies with portly sail, —  
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood, 10  
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea, —  
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,  
That curtsy to them, do them reverence,  
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

*Salanio.* Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,  
The better part of my affections would  
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still  
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind;  
Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads;  
And every object that might make me fear 20  
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt  
Would make me sad.

*Salarino.* My wind, cooling my broth,  
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought  
What harm a wind too great might do at sea.  
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run  
But I should think of shallows and of flats,  
And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,  
Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs  
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church  
And see the holy edifice of stone, 30  
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,  
Which, touching but my gentle vessel's side,  
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,  
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,  
And, in a word, but even now worth this,  
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought  
To think on this; and shall I lack the thought  
That such a thing, bechanced, would make me sad?  
But tell not me; I know Antonio  
Is sad to think upon his merchandise. 40

*Antonio.* Believe me, no; I thank my fortune for it,  
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,  
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate  
Upon the fortune of this present year:  
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

*Salarino.* Why, then you are in love.

*Antonio.*

Fie, fie!

*Salarino.* Not in love neither? Then let us say  
you are sad,

Because you are not merry: and 'twere as easy  
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,  
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed  
Janus, 50



Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:  
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,  
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper;  
And other of such vinegar aspect  
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,  
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

*Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, and GRATIANO.*

*Salanio.* Here comes Bassanio, your most noble  
kinsman,

Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare ye well:

We leave you now with better company.

*Salarino.* I would have stay'd till I had made  
you merry,

60

If worthier friends had not prevented me.

*Antonio.* Your worth is very dear in my regard.

I take it, your own business calls on you,

And you embrace th' occasion to depart.

*Salarino.* Good morrow, my good lords.

*Bassanio.* Good signiors both, when shall we  
laugh? Say, when?

You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?

*Salarino.* We'll make our leisures to attend on  
yours.

*[Exeunt SALARINO and SALANIO.]*

*Lorenzo.* My lord Bassanio, since you have found  
Antonio,

We two will leave you; but at dinner-time,

70

I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

*Bassanio.* I will not fail you.

*Gratiano.* You look not well, Signior Antonio;  
You have too much respect upon the world:  
They lose it that do buy it with much care.

Believe me, you are marvelously changed.

*Antonio.* I hold the world but as the world,

*Gratiano;*

A stage where every man must play a part,

And mine a sad one.

*Gratiano.*

Let me play the Fool:

With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,

80

And let my liver rather heat with wine

Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.

Why should a man whose blood is warm within

Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?

Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice

By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio, —

I love thee, and it is my love that speaks, —

There are a sort of men whose visages

Do cream and mantle like a standing pond;

And do a wilful stillness entertain,

90

With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion

Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;

As who should say, 'I am Sir Oracle,

And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!'

O my Antonio, I do know of these

That therefore only are reputed wise

For saying nothing; who I am very sure,

If they should speak, would almost damn those  
ears

Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.

I'll tell thee more of this another time:

100

But fish not, with this melancholy bait,

For this fool-gudgeon, this opinion.

Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well a while:

I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

*Lorenzo.* Well, we will leave you, then, till dinner-time:

I must be one of these same dumb wise men,  
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

*Gratiano.* Well, keep me company but two years  
moe,

Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

*Antonio.* Farewell: I'll grow a talker for this gear. 110

*Gratiano.* Thanks, i' faith; for silence is only  
commendable

In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.

[*Exeunt GRATIANO and LORENZO.*]

*Antonio.* Is that any thing now?

*Bassanio.* Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of  
nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons  
are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of  
chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them; and  
when you have them, they are not worth the search.

*Antonio.* Well, tell me now, what lady is the same  
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage, 120  
That you to-day promised to tell me of?

*Bassanio.* 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,  
How much I have disabled mine estate,  
By something showing a more swelling port  
Than my faint means would grant continuance:  
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged  
From such a noble rate; but my chief care  
Is to come fairly off from the great debts  
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,  
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio, 130  
I owe the most, in money and in love;  
And from your love I have a warranty

To unburthen all my plots and purposes,  
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

*Antonio.* I pray you, good Bassanio, let me  
know it;

And if it stand, as you yourself still do,  
Within the eye of honor, be assured  
My purse, my person, my extremest means  
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.

*Bassanio.* In my school-days, when I had lost  
one shaft,

140

I shot his fellow of the selfsame flight  
The selfsame way, with more advisèd watch,  
To find the other forth; and by adventuring both  
I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,  
Because what follows is pure innocence.  
I owe you much; and, like a wilful youth,  
That which I owe is lost: but if you please  
To shoot another arrow that self way  
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,  
As I will watch the aim, or to find both  
Or bring your latter hazard back again,  
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

150

*Antonio.* You know me well, and herein spend  
but time

To wind about my love with circumstance;  
And, out of doubt, you do me now more wrong  
In making question of my uttermost  
Than if you had made waste of all I have.  
Then do but say to me what I should do,  
That in your knowledge may by me be done,  
And I am prest unto it: therefore speak.

160

*Bassanio.* In Belmont is a lady richly left;

And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,  
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes from her eyes  
I did receive fair speechless messages.  
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued  
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.  
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth;  
For the four winds blow in from every coast  
Renowned suitors; and her sunny locks  
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;  
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,  
And many Jasons come in quest of her.  
O my Antonio! had I but the means  
To hold a rival place with one of them,  
I have a mind presages me such thrift,  
That I should questionless be fortunate.

*Antonio.* Thou know'st that all my fortunes  
are at sea;

Neither have I money nor commodity  
To raise a present sum: therefore go forth;  
Try what my credit can in Venice do:  
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,  
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.  
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,  
Where money is; and I no question make  
To have it of my trust or for my sake. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II

*Belmont. A room in Portia's house.*

*Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.*

*Portia.* By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is  
awearry of this great world.



*Nerissa.* You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing. It is no small happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean; superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

*Portia.* Good sentences, and well pronounced. 10

*Nerissa.* They would be better, if well followed.

*Portia.* If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood; but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel 20 the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose'! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, *Nerissa*, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?

*Nerissa.* Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations; therefore the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead (whereof who chooses his 30 meaning chooses you) will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

*Portia.* I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

*Nerissa.* First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

*Portia.* Ay, that's a colt, indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a 40 great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.

*Nerissa.* Then is there the County Palatine.

*Portia.* He doth nothing but frown; as who should say, 'An you will not have me, choose'; he hears merry tales, and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend 50 me from these two!

*Nerissa.* How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

*Portia.* God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker. But he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's; a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine: he is every man in no man: if a throstle sing, he falls straight a-capering; he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry 60 him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him; for, if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

*Nerissa.* What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

*Portia.* You know I say nothing to him; for he

understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian; and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture; but 70  
alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behavior everywhere.

*Nerissa.* What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbor?

*Portia.* That he hath a neighborly charity in him; for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety, 80  
and sealed under for another.

*Nerissa.* How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

*Portia.* Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: an the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

*Nerissa.* If he should offer to choose, and choose 90  
the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

*Portia.* Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket: for, if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge.

*Nerissa.* You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their 100 determinations; which is, indeed, to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

*Portia.* If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence; and I wish them a fair departure. 110

*Nerissa.* Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar, and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

*Portia.* Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he called.

*Nerissa.* True, madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

*Portia.* I remember him well; and I remember 120 him worthy of thy praise. How now! what news?

*Enter a Serving-man.*

*Servant.* The four strangers seek you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco; who brings word the prince his master will be here to-night.

*Portia.* If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the con-



dition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me. 130

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. [Exeunt.]

### SCENE III

*Venice. A public place.*

*Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK.*

*Shylock.* Three thousand ducats, — well.

*Bassanio.* Ay, sir, for three months.

*Shylock.* For three months, — well.

*Bassanio.* For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

*Shylock.* Antonio shall become bound, — well.

*Bassanio.* May you stead me? Will you pleasure me? Shall I know your answer?

*Shylock.* Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Antonio bound. 10

*Bassanio.* Your answer to that.

*Shylock.* Antonio is a good man.

*Bassanio.* Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

*Shylock.* Ho! no, no, no, no: my meaning, in saying he is a good man, is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for 20 England; and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men;



there, be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves; — I mean, pirates; and then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; — I think I may take his bond.

*Bassanio.* Be assured you may.

*Shylock.* I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak 30 with Antonio?

*Bassanio.* If it please you to dine with us.

*Shylock.* Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet, the Nazarite, conjured the devil into! I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. — What news on the Rialto? — Who is he comes here?

*Enter ANTONIO.*

*Bassanio.* This is signior Antonio.

*Shylock.* [*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks! 40

I hate him for he is a Christian;  
But more for that, in low simplicity  
He lends out money gratis, and brings down  
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.  
If I can catch him once upon the hip,  
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.  
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,  
Even there where merchants most do congregate,  
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,  
Which he calls interest. Cursèd be my tribe 50  
If I forgive him!

*Bassanio.* Shylock, do you hear?

*Shylock.* I am debating of my present store;  
And, by the near guess of my memory,  
I cannot instantly raise up the gross  
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?  
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,  
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months  
Do you desire? — [*To ANTONIO*] Rest you fair,  
good signior:

Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

*Antonio.* Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor  
borrow

60

By taking nor by giving of excess,  
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,  
I'll break a custom. — [*To BASSANIO*] — Is he yet  
possess'd

How much you would?

*Shylock.* Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

*Antonio.* And for three months.

*Shylock.* I had forgot, — three months; you  
told me so.

Well then, your bond; and, let me see; but hear  
you:

Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow  
Upon advantage.

*Antonio.* I do never use it.

*Shylock.* When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's  
sheep, —

70

This Jacob from our holy Abram was  
(As his wise mother wrought in his behalf)  
The third possessor; ay, he was the third —

*Antonio.* And what of him? did he take interest?

*Shylock* No, not take interest; not, as you would say,

Directly interest: mark what Jacob did.

When Laban and himself were compromised,  
That all the eanlings which were streaked and pied  
Should fall as Jacob's hire,

The skilful shepherd peeled me certain wands, 80  
And stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,  
Who, then conceiving, did in eaning time  
Fall parti-colored lambs, and those were Jacob's.  
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;  
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

*Antonio.* This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;

A thing not in his power to bring to pass,  
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven.  
Was this inserted to make interest good?  
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams? 90

*Shylock.* I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast.  
But note me, signior.

*Antonio.* Mark you this Bassanio,  
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.  
An evil soul, producing holy witness,  
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek;  
A goodly apple rotten at the heart:  
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!

*Shylock.* Three thousand ducats, —'tis a good round sum.

Three months from twelve, — then, let me see; the rate —

*Antonio.* Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?

*Shylock.* Signior Antonio, many a time and oft  
In the Rialto you have rated me  
About my moneys and my usances:  
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug;  
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.  
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat-dog,  
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,  
And all for use of that which is mine own.  
Well then, it now appears you need my help:  
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say, 110  
'Shylock, we would have money': you say so;  
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,  
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur  
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit.  
What should I say to you? Should I not say,  
'Hath a dog money? Is it possible  
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' Or  
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,  
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,  
Say this, — 120  
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;  
You spurn'd me such a day; another time  
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies  
I'll lend you thus much moneys?'

*Antonio.* I am as like to call thee so again,  
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.  
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not  
As to thy friends; for when did friendship take  
A breed of barren metal of his friend?  
But lend it rather to thine enemy; 130  
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face  
Exact the penalty.

*Shylock.* Why, look you, how you storm!  
I would be friends with you, and have your love;  
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with;  
Supply your present wants, and take no doit  
Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear me:  
This is kind I offer.

*Bassanio.* This were kindness.

*Shylock.* This kindness will I show:  
Go with me to a notary; seal me there  
Your single bond, and, in a merry sport, 140  
If you repay me not on such a day,  
In such a place, such sum or sums as are  
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit  
Be nominated for an equal pound  
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken  
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

*Antonio.* Content, in faith; I'll seal to such a  
bond,  
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

*Bassanio.* You shall not seal to such a bond for  
me;  
I'll rather dwell in my necessity. 150

*Antonio.* Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit  
it;  
Within these two months, that's a month before  
This bond expires, I do expect return  
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

*Shylock.* O Father Abram, what these Christians  
are,  
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect  
The thoughts of others! — Pray you, tell me this:  
If he should break his day, what should I gain



By the exaction of the forfeiture?

A pound of man's flesh, taken from a man, 160

Is not so estimable, profitable neither,

As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,

To buy his favor, I extend this friendship;

If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;

And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

*Antonio.* Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

*Shylock.* Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;

Give him direction for this merry bond,

And I will go and purse the ducats straight;

See to my house, left in the fearful guard 170

Of an unthrifty knave; and presently

I will be with you. *[Exit.*

*Antonio.* Hie thee, gentle Jew.

The Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind.

*Bassanio.* I like not fair terms and a villain's  
mind.

*Antonio.* Come on; in this there can be no dis-  
may;

My ships come home a month before the day.

*[Exeunt.*

## ACT II

### SCENE I

*Belmont. A room in Portia's house.*

*Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF MOROCCO and his Train; PORTIA, NERISSA, and others attending.*

*Morocco.* Mislike me not for my complexion,  
The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,  
To whom I am a neighbor and near bred.  
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,  
Where Phœbus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,  
And let us make incision for your love,  
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.  
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine  
Hath fear'd the valiant; by my love, I swear  
The best-regarded virgins of our clime  
Have loved it too: I would not change this hue,  
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

10

*Portia.* In terms of choice I am not solely led  
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;  
Besides, the lottery of my destiny  
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing:  
But, if my father had not scanted me,  
And hedged me by his wit to yield myself  
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,  
Yourself, renownèd prince, then stood as fair  
As any comer I have look'd on yet,  
For my affection.

20

*Morocco.*

Even for that I thank you;

Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets  
To try my fortune. By this scimitar  
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince  
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,  
I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,  
Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,  
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,  
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey, 30  
To win the lady. But, alas the while!  
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice  
Which is the better man, the greater throw  
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:  
So is Alcides beaten by his page;  
And so may I, blind fortune leading me,  
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,  
And die with grieving.

*Portia.* You must take your chance;  
And either not attempt to choose at all,  
Or, swear before you choose, if you choose wrong 40  
Never to speak to lady afterward  
In way of marriage; therefore be advised.

*Morocco.* Nor will not; come, bring me unto my  
chance.

*Portia.* First, forward to the temple; after dinner  
Your hazard shall be made.

*Morocco.* Good fortune then!  
To make me blest or cursed'st among men.

[*Cornets. Exeunt.*

## SCENE II

*Venice. A street.**Enter LAUNCELOT.*

*Launcelot.* Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,' or 'good Gobbo,' or 'good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.' My conscience says, 'No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo,' or, as aforesaid, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: 'Via!' says the fiend; 10  
'away!' says the fiend; 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,' — or rather an honest woman's son; for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste; — well, my conscience says, 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well'; 20  
'fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well': to be ruled by my conscience I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and to run away from the Jew I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard

conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend, my heels are at your commandment; I will run.

30

*Enter Old GOBBO with a basket.*

*Gobbo.* Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

*Launcelot.* [*Aside*] O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel-blind, knows me not: I will try confusions with him.

*Gobbo.* Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

*Launcelot.* Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house. 40

*Gobbo.* By God's sonties, 'twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

*Launcelot.* Talk you of young Master Launcelot?—

[*Aside*] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters.—Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

*Gobbo.* No *master*, sir, but a poor man's son: his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, God be thanked, well to live. 50

*Launcelot.* Well, let his father be what a' will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

*Gobbo.* Your worship's friend and Launcelot, sir.

*Launcelot.* But I pray you, *ergo*, old man, *ergo*, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot?



*Gobbo.* Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

*Launcelot.* *Ergo*, Master Launcelot; talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman 60 (according to Fates and Destinies, and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three, and such branches of learning) is indeed, deceased; or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven.

*Gobbo.* Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

*Launcelot.* [*Aside*] Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? — Do you know me, father?

*Gobbo.* Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy — 70 God rest his soul! — alive or dead?

*Launcelot.* Do you know me, father?

*Gobbo.* Alack, sir, I am sand-blind, I know you not.

*Launcelot.* Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son: give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may; but, in the end, truth will out. 80

*Gobbo.* Pray you, sir, stand up; I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

*Launcelot.* Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing; I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

*Gobbo.* I cannot think you are my son.

*Launcelot.* I know not what I shall think of that:

but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man; and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.

*Gobbo.* Her name is Margery, indeed: I'll be 90  
sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh  
and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a  
beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy  
chin than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail.

*Launcelot.* It should seem, then, that Dobbin's  
tail grows backward; I am sure he had more hair of  
his tail than I have of my face, when I last saw him.

*Gobbo.* Lord, how art thou changed! How dost  
thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a  
present. How 'gree you now? 100

*Launcelot.* Well, well; but for mine own part, as  
I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest  
till I have run some ground. My master's a very  
Jew: give him a present! give him a halter: I am  
famished in his service; you may tell every finger  
I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are  
come: give me your present to one Master Bassanio,  
who, indeed, gives rare new liveries; if I serve not  
him, I will run as far as God has any ground. — O  
rare fortune! here comes the man; — to him, father; 110  
for I am a Jew if I serve the Jew any longer.

*Enter BASSANIO with LEONARDO and other  
Followers.*

*Bassanio.* You may do so; but let it be so hasted  
that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the  
clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries  
to making; and desire Gratiano to come anon to my  
lodging. [Exit a Servant.

*Launcelot.* To him, father.

*Gobbo.* God bless your worship!

*Bassanio.* Gramercy! Wouldst thou aught with me? 120

*Gobbo.* Here's my son, sir, a poor boy, —

*Launcelot.* Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir, as my father shall specify, —

*Gobbo.* He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve, —

*Launcelot.* Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify, —

*Gobbo.* His master and he (saving your worship's reverence) are scarce cater-cousins; — 130

*Launcelot.* To be brief, the very truth is, that the Jew, having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being I hope an old man, shall frutify unto you, —

*Gobbo.* I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship; and my suit is, —

*Launcelot.* In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet, poor man, my father. 140

*Bassanio.* One speak for both — What would you?

*Launcelot.* Serve you, sir.

*Gobbo.* That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

*Bassanio.* I know thee well; thou hast obtain'd thy suit:

Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,  
And hath preferr'd thee; if it be preferment

To leave a rich Jew's service, to become  
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

*Launcelot.* The old proverb is very well parted  
between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have 150  
the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.

*Bassanio.* Thou speak'st it well. — Go, father,  
with thy son. —

Take leave of thy old master, and inquire  
My lodging out. — [*to his Followers*] Give him a  
livery

More guarded than his fellows': see it done.

*Launcelot.* Father, in. — I cannot get a service,  
no! I have ne'er a tongue in my head! — Well [*look-*  
*ing on his palm*], if any man in Italy have a fairer  
table which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall  
have good fortune! Go to; here's a simple line of 160  
life! here's a small trifle of wives: alas, fifteen wives  
is nothing! eleven widows and nine maids is a simple  
coming-in for one man; and then to 'scape drowning  
thrice, — and to be in peril of my life with the edge  
of a feather-bed, — here are simple scapes! Well, if  
fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this  
gear. — Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew  
in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Exeunt LAUNCELOT and Old GOBBO.*]

*Bassanio.* I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on  
this:

These things being bought and orderly bestow'd, 170  
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night

My best-esteem'd acquaintance: hie thee, go,

*Leonardo.* My best endeavors shall be done  
herein.

*Enter GRATIANO.*

*Gratiano.* Where is your master?

*Leonardo.* Yonder, sir, he walks.

*[Exit.*

*Gratiano.* Signior Bassanio, —

*Bassanio.* Gratiano!

*Gratiano.* I have a suit to you.

*Bassanio.* You have obtained it.

*Gratiano.* You must not deny me: I must go with you to Belmont.

*Bassanio.* Why, then you must. But hear thee,

*Gratiano:*

180

Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice, —

Parts that become thee happily enough,

And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;

But where thou art not known, why, there they  
show -

Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain

To allay with some cold drops of modesty

Thy skipping spirit; lest, through thy wild be-  
havior,

I be miscónstrued in the place I go to,

And lose my hopes.

*Gratiano.* Signior Bassanio, hear me:

If I do not put on a sober habit,

190

Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,

Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely

Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes

Thus with my hat, and sigh and say 'amen'

Use all the observance of civility,

Like one well studied in a sad ostent

To please his grandam, — never trust me more.



*Bassanio.* Well, we shall see your bearing.

*Gratiano.* Nay, but I bar to-night; you shall not  
gage me

By what we do to-night.

*Bassanio.* No, that were pity; 200  
I would entreat you rather to put on  
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends  
That purpose merriment. But fare you well;  
I have some business.

*Gratiano.* And I must to Lorenzo and the rest;  
But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III

*Venice. A room in Shylock's house.*

*Enter JESSICA and LAUNCELOT.*

*Jessica.* I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so;  
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,  
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.  
But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee.  
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see  
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:  
Give him this letter; do it secretly;  
And so farewell; I would not have my father  
See me in talk with thee.

*Launcelot.* Adieu! — tears exhibit my tongue. 10  
Most beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! if a Chris-  
tian do not play the knave and get thee, I am much  
deceived. But adieu: these foolish drops do some-  
what drown my manly spirit: adieu!

[*Exit* LAUNCELOT,

*Jessica.* Farewell, good Launcelot.  
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me  
To be ashamed to be my father's child!  
But though I am a daughter to his blood,  
I am not to his manners: O Lorenzo,  
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife;  
Become a Christian and thy loving wife. [Exit. 20

## SCENE IV

*Venice. A street.*

*Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SALANIO.*

*Lorenzo.* Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,  
Disguise us at my lodging, and return  
All in an hour.

*Gratiano.* We have not made good preparation.

*Salarino.* We have not spoke us yet of torch-  
bearers.

*Salanio.* 'Tis vile unless it may be quaintly  
order'd;

And better, in my mind, not undertook.

*Lorenzo.* 'Tis now but four o'clock; we have  
two hours

To furnish us.

*Enter LAUNCELOT with a letter.*

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

*Launcelot.* An it shall please you to break up this, 10  
it shall seem to signify.

*Lorenzo.* I know the hand: in faith, 'tis a fair  
hand;

And whiter than the paper it writ on  
Is the fair hand that writ.

*Gratiano.* Love-news, in faith.

*Launcelot.* By your leave, sir.

*Lorenzo.* Whither goest thou?

*Launcelot.* Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup to-night with my new master the Christian.

*Lorenzo.* Hold here, take this: — tell gentle Jessica I will not fail her; speak it privately; 20

*Go.* — Gentlemen, [Exit LAUNCELOT.

Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?

I am provided of a torch-bearer.

*Salarino.* Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight.

*Salanio.* And so will I.

*Lorenzo.* Meet me and Gratiano At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

*Salarino.* 'Tis good we do so.

[Exeunt SALARINO and SALANIO.

*Gratiano.* Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

*Lorenzo.* I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed

How I shall take her from her father's house; 30

What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with;

What page's suit she hath in readiness.

If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,

It will be for his gentle daughter's sake;

And never dare misfortune cross her foot,

Unless she do it under this excuse, —

That she is issue to a faithless Jew.

Come, go with me; peruse this as thou goest:

Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer.

[Exeunt.

## SCENE V

*Venice. Before Shylock's house.*

*Enter SHYLOCK and LAUNCELOT.*

*Shylock.* Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be  
thy judge,

The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio: —  
What, Jessica! — thou shalt not gormandize,  
As thou hast done with me; — What, Jessica! —  
And sleep and snore and rend apparel out; —  
Why, Jessica, I say

*Launcelot.*

Why, Jessica!

*Shylock.* Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee  
call.

*Launcelot.* Your worship was wont to tell me I  
could do nothing without bidding.

*Enter JESSICA.*

*Jessica.* Call you? What is your will? 10

*Shylock.* I am bid forth to supper, Jessica;  
There are my keys. But wherefore should I go?  
I am not bid for love; they flatter me:  
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon  
The prodigal Christian. — Jessica, my girl,  
Look to my house. — I am right loth to go;  
There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,  
For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

*Launcelot.* I beseech you, sir, go; my young mas-  
ter doth expect your reproach. 20

*Shylock.* So do I his.

*Launcelot.* And they have conspired together,—

I will not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on Black-Monday last, at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four year in the afternoon.

*Shylock.* What! are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:

Lock up my doors; and, when you hear the drum  
And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd fife, 30  
Clamber not you up to the casements then,  
Nor thrust your head into the public street  
To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces;  
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements;  
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter  
My sober house. — By Jacob's staff, I swear  
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night:  
But I will go. — Go you before me, sirrah;  
Say I will come.

*Launcelot.* I will go before, sir. —  
Mistress, look out at window, for all this; 40  
There will come a Christian by,  
Will be worth a Jewess' eye. [*Exit.*

*Shylock.* What says that fool of Hagar's offspring;  
ha?

*Jessica.* His words were 'Farewell, mistress';  
nothing else.

*Shylock.* The patch is kind enough; but a huge  
feeder.

Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day  
More than the wild-cat: drones hive not with me;  
Therefore I part with him; and part with him  
To one that I would have him help to waste



His borrow'd purse. — Well, Jessica, go in; 50

Perhaps I will return immediately;

Do as I bid you; shut doors after you:

Fast bind, fast find, —

A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [Exit.

*Jessica.* Farewell; and if my fortune be not  
crost,

I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [Exit.

### SCENE VI

*The same.*

*Enter GRATIANO and SALARINO, masqued.*

*Gratiano.* This is the pent-house under which  
Lorenzo

Desired us to make stand.

*Salarino.* His hour is almost past.

*Gratiano.* And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,  
For lovers ever run before the clock.

*Salarino.* O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly  
To seal love's bonds new made, than they are wont  
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!

*Gratiano.* That ever holds: who riseth from a  
feast

With that keen appetite that he sits down?

Where is the horse that doth untread again

His tedious measures with the unbated fire

That he did pace them first? All things that are,  
Are with more spirit chasèd than enjoy'd.

*Salarino.* Here comes Lorenzo; more of this  
hereafter.

*Enter LORENZO.*

*Lorenzo.* Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;

Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:

When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,

I'll watch as long for you then. — Approach;

Here dwells my father Jew. — Ho! who's within?

*Enter JESSICA, above, in boy's clothes.*

*Jessica.* Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty, 20

Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

*Lorenzo.* Lorenzo, and thy love.

*Jessica.* Lorenzo, certain; and my love, indeed;

For who love I so much? and now who knows

But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

*Lorenzo.* Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.

*Jessica.* Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.

I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,

For I am much ashamed of my exchange:

But love is blind, and lovers cannot see

The pretty follies that themselves commit;

For, if they could, Cupid himself would blush

To see me thus transformèd to a boy. 30

*Lorenzo.* Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.

*Jessica.* What, must I hold a candle to my shames?

They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.

Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love;

And I should be obscured.

*Lorenzo.*

So you are, sweet,

Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.

But come at once;

40

For the close night doth play the runaway,

And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.

*Jessica.* I will make fast the doors, and gild myself

With some more ducats, and be with you straight.

*[Exit above.]*

*Gratiano.* Now, by my hood, a Gentile and no Jew.

*Lorenzo.* Beshrew me, but I love her heartily:

For she is wise, if I can judge of her;

And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;

And true she is, as she hath proved herself;

And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,

50

Shall she be placèd in my constant soul.

*Enter JESSICA, below.*

What, art thou come? — On, gentlemen; away

Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

*[Exit, with JESSICA and SALARINO.]*

*Enter ANTONIO.*

*Antonio.* Who's there?

*Gratiano.* Signior Antonio?

*Antonio.* Fie, fie, Gratiano! where are all the rest?

'Tis nine o'clock; our friends all stay for you.

No masque to-night; the wind is come about;

Bassanio presently will go aboard:

I have sent twenty out to seek for you.

60

*Gratiano.* I am glad on't; I desire no more  
delight  
Than to be under sail and gone to-night.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE VII

*Belmont.* A room in *Portia's* house.

*Flourish of Cornets.* Enter *PORTIA*, with the *PRINCE*  
OF *MOROCCO*, and both their *Trains*.

*Portia.* Go, draw aside the curtains, and discover  
The several caskets to this noble prince.  
Now make your choice.

*Morocco.* The first, of gold, who this inscription  
bears:

Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.

The second, silver, which this promise carries:

Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.

This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt:

Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.

How shall I know if I do choose the right? 10

*Portia.* The one of them contains my picture,  
prince;

If you choose that, then I am yours withal.

*Morocco.* Some god direct my judgment! Let me  
see;

I will survey the inscriptions back again.

What says this leaden casket?

Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.

Must give — for what? for lead? hazard for lead?  
This casket threatens: men that hazard all

Do it in hope of fair advantages;  
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross; 20  
I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.  
What says the silver with her virgin hue?

Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.

As much as he deserves? — Pause there, Morocco,  
And weigh thy value with an even hand:  
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,  
Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough  
May not extend so far as to the lady:  
And yet to be afeard of my deserving  
Were but a weak disabling of myself. 30  
As much as I deserve! — Why, that's the lady:  
I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,  
In graces, and in qualities of breeding;  
But more than these, in love I do deserve.  
What if I stray'd no further, but chose here? —  
Let's see once more this saying graved in gold:

Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.

Why, that's the lady; all the world desires her:  
From the four corners of the earth they come  
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint. 40  
The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds  
Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now,  
For princes to come view fair Portia!  
The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head  
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar  
To stop the foreign spirits; but they come,  
As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia.  
One of these three contains her heavenly picture.  
Is't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation



To think so base a thought: it were too gross 50  
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.

Or shall I think in silver she's immured,  
Being ten times undervalued to tried gold?  
O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem  
Was set in worse than gold. They have in England  
A coin that bears the figure of an angel  
Stamped in gold, but that's insculped upon;  
But here an angel in a golden bed  
Lies all within. — Deliver me the key;  
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may! 60

*Portia.* There, take it, prince; and, if my form  
lie there,

Then I am yours. [*He unlocks the golden casket.*

*Morocco.* O hell! what have we here?

A carrion death, within whose empty eye  
There is a written scroll! I'll read the writing.

All that glisters is not gold;  
Often have you heard that told:  
Many a man his life hath sold  
But my outside to behold:  
Had you been as wise as bold, 70  
Young in limbs, in judgment old,  
Your answer had not been inscroll'd:  
Fare you well; your suit is cold.

Cold, indeed; and labor lost:

Then, farewell, heat; and welcome, frost! —

*Portia*, adieu! I have too grieved a heart  
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part.

[*Exit, with his Train. Flourish of cornets.*

*Portia.* A gentle riddance. — Draw the curtains;  
go.

Let all of his complexion choose me so. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE VIII

*Venice. A street.*

*Enter SALARINO and SALANIO.*

*Salarino.* Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail;  
With him is Gratiano gone along;  
And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.

*Salanio.* The villain Jew with outcries raised the  
duke;  
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

*Salarino.* He came too late, the ship was under  
sail:

But there the duke was given to understand  
That in a gondola were seen together  
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica;  
Besides, Antonio certified the duke  
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.

*Salanio.* I never heard a passion so confused,  
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,  
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:  
'My daughter! — O my ducats! — O my daughter!  
Fled with a Christian? — O my Christian ducats! —  
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!  
A sealèd bag, two sealèd bags of ducats,  
Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!  
And jewels; two stones, two rich and precious stones, 20  
Stolen by my daughter! — Justice! find the girl!  
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats!'

*Salarino.* Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,  
Crying — 'his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.'

*Salanio.* Let good Antonio look he keep his day,  
Or he shall pay for this.

*Salarino.*

Marry, well remember'd.

I reason'd with a Frenchman yesterday,  
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part  
The French and English, there miscarried  
A vessel of our country, richly fraught:  
I thought upon Antonio when he told me,  
And wish'd in silence that it were not his.

30

*Salanio.* You were best to tell Antonio what you  
hear;

Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

*Salarino.* A kinder gentleman treads not the  
earth.

I saw Bassanio and Antonio part:

Bassanio told him he would make some speed  
Of his return: he answered — 'Do not so,  
Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,  
But stay the very riping of the time;

40

And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,  
Let it not enter in your mind of love;  
Be merry; and employ your chiefest thoughts  
To courtship, and such fair ostents of love  
As shall conveniently become you there:'  
And even there, his eye being big with tears,  
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,  
And with affection wondrous sensible  
He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.

*Salanio* I think he only loves the world for him. 50  
I pray thee, let us go and find him out,  
And quicken his embracèd heaviness  
With some delight or other.

*Salarino.*

Do we so. [Exeunt.]

## SCENE IX

*Belmont. A room in Portia's house.*

*Enter NERISSA with a Servitor.*

*Nerissa.* Quick, quick, I pray thee; draw the curtain straight;

The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath,  
And comes to his election presently.

*Flourish of Cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF ARRAGON,  
PORTIA, and their Trains.*

*Portia.* Behold, there stand the caskets, noble prince;

If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,  
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized:  
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,  
You must be gone from hence immediately.

*Arragon.* I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:

First, never to unfold to any one  
Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail  
Of the right casket, never in my life  
To woo a maid in way of marriage;  
Lastly, if I do fail in fortune of my choice,  
Immediately to leave you and be gone. 10

*Portia.* To these injunctions every one doth swear  
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

*Arragon.* And so have I address'd me. Fortune  
now

To my heart's hope! — Gold, silver, and base lead.

Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath. 20

You shall look fairer ere I give or hazard.

What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:

Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.

What many men desire! That *many* may be meant  
By the fool multitude, that choose by show,  
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach,  
Which pries not to th'interior, but, like the martlet,  
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,  
Even in the force and road of casualty.

I will not choose what many men desire, 30  
Because I will not jump with common spirits,  
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.  
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;  
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:

Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.

And well said too; for who shall go about  
To cozen fortune, and be honorable  
Without the stamp of merit! Let none presume  
To wear an undeservèd dignity.

O, that estates, degrees, and offices 40  
Were not derived corruptly! and that clear honor  
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!  
How many then should cover that stand bare!  
How many be commanded that command!  
How much low peasantry would then be glean'd  
From the true seed of honor! and how much honor  
Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times,  
To be new-varnish'd! Well, but to my choice:

Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.

I will assume desert. — Give me a key for this, 50  
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

[*He opens the silver casket.*]



*Portia* Too long a pause for that which you find  
· there.

*Arragon.* What's here? the portrait of a blinking  
idiot,

Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.

How much unlike art thou to *Portia*!

How much unlike my hopes and my deservings

Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.

Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?

Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

*Portia.* To offend and judge are distinct offices 60  
And of opposèd natures.

*Arragon.*

What is here?

[*Reads*]

The fire seven times tried this:  
Seven times tried that judgment is,  
That did never choose amiss:  
Some there be that shadows kiss;  
Such have but a shadow's bliss:  
There be fools alive, I wis,  
Silver'd o'er; and so was this.  
Take what wife you will to bed,  
I will ever be your head:  
So begone: you are sped.

Still more fool I shall appear

By the time I linger here:

With one fool's head I came to woo,

But I go away with two.

Sweet, adieu! I'll keep my oath,

Patiently to bear my wroth.

[*Exeunt* ARRAGON and Train.

*Portia.* Thus hath the candle singed the moth.  
O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,  
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

*Nerissa.* The ancient saying is no heresy, —  
Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.

*Portia.* Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

*Enter a Servant.*

*Servant.* Where is my lady?

*Portia.* Here: what would my lord?

*Servant.* Madam, there is alighted at your gate  
A young Venetian, one that comes before  
To signify the approaching of his lord;  
From whom he bringeth sensible regrets;  
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,  
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen 90  
So likely an ambassador of love:

A day in April never came so sweet,  
To show how costly summer was at hand,  
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.

*Portia.* No more, I pray thee: I am half afeard  
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,  
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.  
Come, come, Nerissa; for I long to see  
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.

*Nerissa.* Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be! 100

[*Exeunt.*

## ACT III

### SCENE I

*Venice. A street.*

*Enter SALANIO and SALARINO.*

*Salanio.* Now, what news on the Rialto?

*Salarino.* Why, yet it lives there unchecked, that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas, — the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat, and fatal, where the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip Report be an honest woman of her word.

*Salanio.* I would she were as lying a gossip in that, as ever knapped ginger, or made her neighbors believe she wept for the death of a third husband. 10  
But it is true, — without any slips of prolixity, or crossing the plain highway of talk, — that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio, — O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company! —

*Salarino.* Come, the full stop.

*Salanio.* Ha! what say'st thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

*Salarino.* I would it might prove the end of his losses!

*Salanio.* Let me say 'amen' betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer; for here he comes in the 20 likeness of a Jew.

*Enter SHYLOCK.*

How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

*Shylock.* You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

*Salarino.* That's certain. I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

*Salanio.* And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam. 30

*Shylock.* She is damned for it.

*Salarino.* That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

*Shylock.* My own flesh and blood to rebel!

*Salanio.* Out upon it, old carrion! rebels it at these years?

*Shylock.* I say my daughter is my flesh and blood.

*Salarino.* There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods, than there is between red wine 40 and Rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

*Shylock.* There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar that was used to come so smug upon the mart. Let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond.

*Salarino.* Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt 50 not take his flesh: what's that good for?

*Shylock.* To bait fish withal: if it will feed noth-

ing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, 60 subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The vil- 70 lany you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

*Enter a Servant.*

*Servant.* Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house, and desires to speak with you both.

*Salarino.* We have been up and down to seek him.

*Enter TUBAL*

*Salanio.* Here comes another of the tribe; a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

*[Exeunt SALANIO, SALARINO, and Servant.]*

*Shylock.* How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?



*Tubal.* I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

*Shylock.* Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now: two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? — Why, 90 so: — and I know not what's spent in the search. Why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights o' my shoulders; no sighs but o' my breathing; no tears but o' my shedding.

*Tubal.* Yes, other men have ill luck too. Antonio, as I heard in Genoa, —

*Shylock.* What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

*Tubal.* — hath an argosy cast away, coming 100 from Tripolis.

*Shylock.* I thank God, I thank God! — is it true, is it true?

*Tubal.* I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

*Shylock.* I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha! — here in Genoa.

*Tubal.* Your daughterspent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.

*Shylock.* Thou stick'st a dagger in me: I shall 110 never see my gold again. Fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

*Tubal.* There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

*Shylock* I am very glad of it: I'll plague him; I'll torture him; I am glad of it.

*Tubal.* One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

*Shylock.* Out upon her! Thou torturest me, 120  
*Tubal:* it was my turquoise: I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

*Tubal.* But Antonio is certainly undone.

*Shylock.* Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, *Tubal*, fee me an officer, bespeak him a fortnight before: I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, *Tubal*, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good *Tubal*; at our synagogue, 130  
*Tubal.*

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II

*Belmont.* A room in *Portia's* house.

*Enter* BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, and Attendants.

*Portia.* I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong, I lose your company; therefore, forbear awhile. There's something tells me — but it is not love — I would not lose you; and you know yourself Hate counsels not in such a quality. But lest you should not understand me well, —

And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought, —  
I would detain you here some month or two  
Before you venture for me. I could teach you 10  
How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;  
So will I never be: so may you miss me;  
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,  
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,  
They have o'erlook'd me and divided me;  
One half of me is yours, the other half yours, —  
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,  
And so all yours. O, these naughty times  
Put bars between the owners and their rights!  
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so, 20  
Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.  
I speak too long; but 'tis to peize the time,  
To eke it and to draw it out in length,  
To stay you from election.

*Bassanio.*

Let me choose;

For, as I am, I live upon the rack.

*Portia.* Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess  
What treason there is mingled with your love.

*Bassanio.* None but that ugly treason of mis-  
trust,

Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love:  
There may as well be amity and life 30  
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.

*Portia.* Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,  
Where men enforced do speak anything.

*Bassanio.* Promise me life, and I'll confess the  
truth.

*Portia.* Well, then, confess and live.

*Bassanio.*

Confess and love

Had been the very sum of my confession:  
O happy torment, when my torturer  
Doth teach me answers for deliverance!  
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

*Portia.* Away, then! I am lock'd in one of  
them:

40

If you do love me, you will find me out.  
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.  
Let music sound while he doth make his choice;  
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,  
Fading in music: that the comparison  
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream  
And watery death-bed for him. He may win;  
And what is music then? Then music is  
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow  
To a new-crowned monarch: such it is,  
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day  
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear  
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,  
With no less presence, but with much more love,  
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem  
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy  
To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice;  
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,  
With bleared visages, come forth to view  
The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules!  
Live thou, I live. With much much more dismay  
I view the fight than thou that mak'st the fray.  
*Music, whilst BASSANIO comments on the caskets to  
himself.*

50

60

## SONG

Tell me where is fancy bred,  
Or in the heart or in the head,  
How begot, how nourished.

Reply, reply.

It is engender'd in the eyes,  
With gazing fed; and fancy dies  
In the cradle where it lies.

Let us all ring fancy's knell;

I'll begin it, — Ding, dong, bell.

70

*All.*

Ding, dong, bell.

*Bassanio.* So may the outward shows be least  
themselves:

The world is still deceived with ornament.

In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt

But, being season'd with a gracious voice,

Obscures the show of evil? In religion,

What damnèd error, but some sober brow

Will bless it and approve it with a text,

Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?

80

There is no vice so simple but assumes

Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.

How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false

As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins

The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,

Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk;

And these assume but valor's excrement

To render them redoubted! Look on beauty,

And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight;

Which therein works a miracle in nature,

90

Making them lightest that wear most of it:

So are those crispèd snaky golden locks

Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,

Upon supposèd fairness, often known



To be the dowry of a second head,  
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.  
Thus ornament is but the guilèd shore  
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf  
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,  
The seeming truth which cunning times put on 100  
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,  
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee:  
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge  
'Tween man and man. But thou, thou meagre  
lead,  
Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,  
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence;  
And here choose I. Joy be the consequence!

*Portia.* [*Aside*] How all the other passions fleet  
to air,  
As doubtful thoughts and rash-embraced despair  
And shuddering fear and green-eyed jealousy! 110  
O love, be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;  
In measure rain thy joy; scant this excess.  
I feel too much thy blessing: make it less,  
For fear I surfeit!

*Bassanio.*

What find I here?

[*Opening the leaden casket.*]

Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god  
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?  
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,  
Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips,  
Parted with sugar breath: so sweet a bar  
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs 120  
The painter plays the spider, and hath woven  
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men,

Faster than gnats in cobwebs. But her eyes! —  
How could he see to do them? having made one,  
Methinks it should have power to steal both his,  
And leave itself unfurnish'd. Yet look, how far  
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow  
In underprizing it, so far this shadow  
Doth limp behind the substance. — Here's the scroll,  
The continent and summary of my fortune.

130

You that choose not by the view  
Chance as fair, and choose as true!  
Since this fortune falls to you,  
Be content, and seek no new.  
If you be pleased with this  
And hold your fortune for your bliss,  
Turn you where your lady is  
And claim her with a loving kiss,

A gentle scroll. — Fair lady, by your leave,  
I come by note, to give and to receive.  
Like one of two contending in a prize,  
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,  
Hearing applause and universal shout,  
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt  
Whether those peals of praise be his or no;  
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so;  
As doubtful whether what I see be true,  
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

140

*Portia.* You see me, lord Bassanio, where I stand,  
Such as I am: though for myself alone  
I would not be ambitious in my wish,  
To wish myself much better; yet for you  
I would be trebled twenty times myself:  
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times  
More rich;

150

That, only to stand high in your account,  
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,  
Exceed account: but the full sum of me  
Is sum of — something, which, to term in gross,  
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractis'd: 160  
Happy in this, she is not yet so old  
But she may learn; happier than this,  
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;  
Happiest of all in that her gentle spirit  
Commits itself to yours to be directed,  
As from her lord, her governor, her king.  
Myself and what is mine to you and yours  
Is now converted: but now I was the lord  
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,  
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now, 170  
This house, these servants, and this same myself  
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;  
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,  
Let it presage the ruin of your love,  
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

*Bassanio.* Madam, you have bereft me of all  
words;

Only my blood speaks to you in my veins:  
And there is such confusion in my powers  
As, after some oration fairly spoke  
By a belovèd prince, there doth appear 180  
Among the buzzing, pleasèd multitude;  
Where every something, being blent together,  
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,  
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring  
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence;  
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

*Nerissa.* My lord and lady, it is now our time,  
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,  
To cry, good joy: good joy, my lord and lady!

*Gratiano.* My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady, 190  
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;  
For I am sure you can wish none from me:  
And when your honors mean to solemnize  
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you  
Even at that time I may be married too.

*Bassanio.* With all my heart, so thou canst get a  
wife.

*Gratiano.* I thank your lordship; you have got  
me one.

My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:  
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;  
You loved, I loved; for intermission 200  
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.  
Your fortune stood upon the caskets there;  
And so did mine too, as the matter falls;  
For wooing here until I sweat again,  
And swearing till my very roof was dry  
With oaths of love, at last, — if promise last, —  
I got a promise of this fair one here  
To have her love, provided that your fortune  
Achieved her mistress.

*Portia.* Is this true, Nerissa?

*Nerissa.* Madame, it is, so you stand pleased  
withal. 210

*Bassanio.* And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

*Gratiano.* Yes, faith, my lord.

*Bassanio.* Our feast shall be much honor'd in  
your marriage.]

*Gratiano.* But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?

What, and my old Venetian friend, Salerio?

*Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, and SALERIO.*

*Bassanio.* Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither; If that the youth of my new interest here Have power to bid you welcome. — By your leave, I bid my very friends and countrymen, Sweet Portia, welcome.

*Portia.* So do I, my lord; 220 They are entirely welcome.

*Lorenzo.* I thank your honor. — For my part, my lord, My purpose was not to have seen you here; But meeting with Salerio by the way, He did entreat me, past all saying nay, To come with him along.

*Salerio.* I did, my lord; And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio Commends him to you. [*Gives BASSANIO a letter.*]

*Bassanio.* Ere I ope this letter, I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.

*Salerio.* Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind; 230 Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there Will show you his estate.

*Gratiano.* Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome. — Your hand, Salerio. What's the news from Venice? How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio? I know he will be glad of our success; We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.



*Salerio.* I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost!

*Portia.* There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper,

That steal the color from Bassanio's cheek: 240  
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world  
Could turn so much the constitution  
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse? —  
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,  
And I must freely have the half of anything  
That this same paper brings you.

*Bassanio.* O sweet Portia,  
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words  
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,  
When I did first impart my love to you,  
I freely told you, all the wealth I had 250  
Ran in my veins, — I was a gentleman;  
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,  
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see  
How much I was a braggart. When I told you  
My state was nothing, I should then have told you  
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,  
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,  
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,  
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;  
The paper as the body of my friend, 260  
And every word in it a gaping wound,  
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?  
Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?  
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,  
From Lisbon, Barbary, and India?  
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch

Of merchant-marring rocks?

*Salerio.*

Not one, my lord.

Besides, it should appear that, if he had  
The present money to discharge the Jew,  
He would not take it. Never did I know  
A creature that did bear the shape of man,  
So keen and greedy to confound a man:  
He plies the duke at morning and at night;  
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,  
If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,  
The duke himself, and the magnificoes  
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;  
But none can drive him from the envious plea  
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

270

*Jessica.* When I was with him, I have heard  
him swear

280

To Tubal, and to Chus, his countrymen,  
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh  
Than twenty times the value of the sum  
That he did owe him; and I know, my lord,  
If law, authority, and power deny not,  
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

*Portia.* Is it your dear friend that is thus in  
trouble?

*Bassanio.* The dearest friend to me, the kindest  
man,

The best condition'd and unwearied spirit  
In doing courtesies; and one in whom  
The ancient Roman honor more appears  
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

290

*Portia.* What sum owes he the Jew?

*Bassanio.* For me three thousand ducats.

*Portia.*

What, no more?

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;  
Double six thousand, and then treble that,  
Before a friend of this description  
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.  
First go with me to church and call me wife,  
And then away to Venice to your friend;  
For never shall you lie by Portia's side  
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold  
To pay the petty debt twenty times over;  
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.  
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime  
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!  
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day:  
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer:  
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.  
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

300

310

*Bassanio.* [reads]

Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since, in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure; if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.

*Portia.* O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!

*Bassanio.* Since I have your good leave to go  
away,

I will make haste: but, till I come again,  
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,  
Nor rest be interposer 'twixt us twain.

320

[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE III

*Venice. A street.*

*Enter SHYLOCK, SALARINO, ANTONIO, and Gaoler.*

*Shylock.* Gaoler, look to him: tell not me of  
mercy:

This is the fool that lends out money gratis.

Gaoler, look to him.

*Antonio.* Hear me yet, good Shylock.

*Shylock.* I'll have my bond; speak not against  
my bond:

I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.

Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause:

But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:

The duke shall grant me justice. — I do wonder,

Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond

To come abroad with him at his request.

10

*Antonio.* I pray thee, hear me speak.

*Shylock.* I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee  
speak:

I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.

I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,

To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield

To Christian intercessors. Follow not;

I'll have no speaking; I will have my bond. [*Exit.*

*Salarino.* It is the most impenetrable cur  
That ever kept with men.

*Antonio.* Let him alone:

I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.

20

He seeks my life; his reason well I know:

I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures

Many that have at times made moan to me;  
Therefore he hates me.

*Salarino.*

I am sure the duke

Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

*Antonio.* The duke cannot deny the course of  
law;

For the commodity that strangers have  
With us in Venice, if it be denied,  
Will much impeach the justice of the state;  
Since that the trade and profit of the city  
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go:  
These griefs and losses have so 'bated me,  
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh  
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.

Well, gaoler, on. — Pray God, Bassanio come  
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not!

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV

*Belmont. A room in Portia's house.*

*Enter* PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, and  
BALTHAZAR.

*Lorenzo.* Madam, although I speak it in your  
presence,

You have a noble and a true conceit  
Of God-like amity; which appears most strongly  
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.  
But, if you knew to whom you show this honor,  
How true a gentleman you send relief,  
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,  
I know you would be prouder of the work  
Than customary bounty can enforce you.



*Portia.* I never did repent for doing good, 10  
Nor shall not now: for in companions  
That do converse and waste the time together,  
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,  
There must be needs a like proportion  
Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit;  
Which makes me think that this Antonio,  
Being the bosom lover of my lord,  
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,  
How little is the cost I have bestow'd  
In purchasing the semblance of my soul 20  
From out the state of hellish cruelty!  
This comes too near the praising of myself;  
Therefore no more of it: hear other things.  
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands  
The husbandry and manage of my house  
Until my lord's return: for mine own part,  
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow  
To live in prayer and contemplation,  
Only attended by Nerissa here,  
Until her husband and my lord's return: 30  
There is a monastery two miles off,  
And there we will abide. I do desire you  
Not to deny this imposition,  
The which my love and some necessity  
Now lays upon you.

*Lorenzo.* Madam, with all my heart,  
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

*Portia.* My people do already know my mind,  
And will acknowledge you and Jessica  
In place of lord Bassanio and myself.  
So fare you well till we shall meet again. 40

*Lorenzo.* Fair thoughts and happy hours attend  
on you!

*Jessica.* I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

*Portia.* I thank you for your wish, and am well  
pleased

To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.

[*Exeunt JESSICA and LORENZO.*]

Now, Balthazar,

As I have ever found thee honest-true,

So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,

And use thou all the endeavor of a man

In speed to Padua; see thou render this

Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;

And look what notes and garments he doth give  
thee,

Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed

Unto the tranect, to the common ferry

Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,

But get thee gone; I shall be there before thee.

*Balthazar.* Madam, I go with all convenient  
speed. [Exit.

*Portia.* Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand  
That you yet know not of: we'll see our husbands  
Before they think of us.

*Nerissa.* Shall they see us?

*Portia.* They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit 60  
That they shall think we are accomplished  
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,  
When we are both accoutred like young men,  
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,  
And wear my dagger with the braver grace;  
And speak, between the change of man and boy,

With a reed voice; and turn two mincing steps  
Into a manly stride; and speak of frays,  
Like a fine-bragging youth; and tell quaint lies,  
How honorable ladies sought my love, 70  
Which I denying, they fell sick and died;  
I could not do withal: then I'll repent,  
And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them;  
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,  
That men shall swear I've discontinued school  
Above a twelvemonth: — I have within my mind  
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,  
Which I will practise.  
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device  
When I am in my coach, which stays for us 80  
At the park gate; and therefore haste away,  
For we must measure twenty miles to-day. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE V

*The same. A garden.*

*Enter LAUNCELOT and JESSICA.*

*Launcelot.* Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children: therefore, I promise you, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter: therefore be of good cheer; for, truly, I think you are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good; and that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

*Jessica.* And what hope is that, I pray thee?

*Launcelot.* Marry, you may partly hope that you 10  
are not the Jew's daughter.

*Jessica.* That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed: so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

*Launcelot.* Truly then I fear you are damned both by father and mother: thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother; well, you are gone both ways.

*Jessica.* I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

20

*Launcelot.* Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians enow before; e'en as many as could well live, one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

*Enter LORENZO.*

*Jessica.* I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say; here he comes.

*Lorenzo.* I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

30

*Jessica.* Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo. Launcelot and I are out: he tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter: and he says you are no good member of the commonwealth; for, in converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork.

*Lorenzo.* I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence, and discourse grow commendable in none only but parrots. — Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

40

*Launcelot.* That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

*Lorenzo.* Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

*Launcelot.* That is done, too, sir; only 'cover' is the word.

*Lorenzo.* Will you cover, then, sir?

*Launcelot.* Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

*Lorenzo.* Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner. 50

*Launcelot.* For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humors and conceits shall govern.

[*Exit.*

*Lorenzo.* O dear discretion, how his words are suited!

The fool hath planted in his memory  
An army of good words; and I do know  
A many fools, that stand in better place, 60  
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricksy word  
Defy the matter. — How cheer'st thou, Jessica?  
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion:  
How dost thou like the lord Bassanio's wife?

*Jessica.* Past all expressing. It is very meet  
The lord Bassanio live an upright life;  
For, having such a blessing in his lady,  
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;  
And if on earth he do not mean it, then  
In reason he should never come to heaven. 70



Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match,  
And on the wager lay two earthly women,  
And Portia one, there must be something else  
Pawn'd with the other; for the poor rude world  
Hath not her fellow.

*Lorenzo.* Even such a husband  
Hast thou of me, as she is for a wife.

*Jessica.* Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

*Lorenzo.* I will anon; first, let us go to dinner.

*Jessica.* Nay, let me praise you while I have a  
stomach.

*Lorenzo.* No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk; 80  
Then, howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things  
I shall digest it.

*Jessica.* Well, I'll set you forth. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT IV

### SCENE I

*Venice. A court of justice.*

*Enter the DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALARINO, SALERIO, and others.*

*Duke.* What, is Antonio here?

*Antonio.* Ready, so please your grace.

*Duke.* I am sorry for thee; thou art come to answer

A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch  
Uncapable of pity, void and empty  
From any dram of mercy.

*Antonio.* I have heard  
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify  
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate,  
And that no lawful means can carry me  
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose  
My patience to his fury; and am arm'd  
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,  
The very tyranny and rage of his.

*Duke.* Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

*Salerio.* He is ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

*Enter SHYLOCK.*

*Duke.* Make room, and let him stand before our face.

Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,  
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice

To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought  
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse, more strange 20  
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;  
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,  
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,  
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,  
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love,  
Forgive a moiety of the principal;  
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,  
That have of late so huddled on his back,  
Enough to press a royal merchant down  
And pluck commiseration of his state 30  
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,  
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd  
To offices of tender courtesy.  
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

*Shylock.* I have possess'd your grace of what I  
purpose;

And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn  
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:  
If you deny it, let the danger light  
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.  
You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have 40  
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive  
Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that:  
But say it is my humor: is it answer'd?  
What if my house be troubled with a rat,  
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats  
To have it baned? What, are you answer'd yet?  
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;  
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;  
Some, when they hear the bagpipe.

As there is no firm reason to be render'd, 50  
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;  
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;  
Why he, a wauling bagpipe; but of force  
Must yield to such inevitable shame  
As to offend, himself being offended;  
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,  
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing  
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus  
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

*Bassanio.* This is no answer, thou unfeeling man, 60  
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

*Shylock.* I am not bound to please thee with my  
answer.

*Bassanio.* Do all men kill the things they do not  
love?

*Shylock.* Hates any man the thing he would not  
kill?

*Bassanio.* Every offence is not a hate at first.

*Shylock.* What, wouldst thou have a serpent  
sting thee twice?

*Antonio.* I pray you, think you question with  
the Jew:

You may as well go stand upon the beach,  
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;  
You may as well use question with the wolf 70  
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;  
You may as well forbid the mountain pines  
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise  
When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven;  
You may as well do anything most hard,  
As seek to soften that (than which what's harder?)

His Jewish heart : therefore, I do beseech you,  
Make no more offers, use no further means ;  
But with all brief and plain conveniency,  
Let me have judgment and the Jew his will. 80

*Bassanio.* For thy three thousand ducats here is  
six.

*Shylock.* If every ducat in six thousand ducats  
Were in six parts and every part a ducat,  
I would not draw them ; I would have my bond.

*Duke.* How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering  
none ?

*Shylock.* What judgment shall I dread, doing no  
wrong ?

You have among you many a purchased slave,  
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,  
You use in abject and in slavish parts,  
Because you bought them. Shall I say to you, 90  
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs ?  
Why sweat they under burthens ? Let their beds  
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates  
Be season'd with such viands ? You will answer,  
'The slaves are ours' : so do I answer you :  
The pound of flesh which I demand of him  
Is dearly bought ; 'tis mine, and I will have it :  
If you deny me, fie upon your law !

There is no force in the decrees of Venice :  
I stand for judgment : answer, shall I have it ? 100

*Duke.* Upon my power I may dismiss this court,  
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,  
Whom I have sent for to determine this,  
Come here to-day.

*Salerio.* My lord, here stays without



A messenger with letters from the doctor,  
New come from Padua.

*Duke.* Bring us the letters; call the messenger.

*Bassanio.* Good cheer, Antonio! What, man!  
courage yet!

The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,  
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood. 110

*Antonio.* I am a tainted wether of the flock,  
Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit  
Drops earliest to the ground; and so let me:  
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,  
Than to live still and write mine epitaph.

*Enter NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk.*

*Duke.* Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

*Nerissa.* From both, my lord: Bellario greets  
your grace. [*Presenting a letter.*]

*Bassanio.* Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

*Shylock.* To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt  
there.

*Gratiano.* Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh 120  
Jew,

Thou mak'st thy knife keen; but no metal can,  
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness  
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?

*Shylock.* No, none that thou hast wit enough to  
make.

*Gratiano.* O, be thou damn'd, inexorable dog!  
And for thy life let justice be accused.  
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,  
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,

That souls of animals infuse themselves  
Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit 130  
Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human slaughter,  
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,  
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,  
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires  
Are wolfish, bloody, starv'd, and ravenous.

*Shylock.* Till thou canst rail the seal from off my  
bond,

Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:  
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall  
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

*Duke.* This letter from Bellario doth commend 140  
A young and learned doctor to our court.  
Where is he?

*Nerissa.* He attendeth here hard by,  
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

*Duke.* With all my heart. Some three or four  
of you  
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.  
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

*Clerk* [reads].

Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter  
I am very sick; but in the instant that your messenger came, 150  
in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his  
name is Balthazar. I acquainted him with the cause in con-  
troversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turn'd  
o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion;  
which, bettered with his own learning (the greatness whereof  
I cannot enough commend), comes with him, at my importu-  
nity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you,  
let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend  
estimation; for, I never knew so young a body with so old a  
head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial 160  
shall better publish his commendation.

*Duke.* You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes:

And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

*Enter PORTIA, dressed like a doctor of laws.*

Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?

*Portia.* I did, my lord.

*Duke.* You are welcome: take your place.  
Are you acquainted with the difference  
That holds this present question in the court?

*Portia.* I am informèd throughly of the cause.  
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

*Duke.* Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth. 170

*Portia.* Is your name Shylock?

*Shylock.* Shylock is my name.

*Portia.* Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;  
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law  
Cannot impugn you, as you do proceed. —  
[*To ANTONIO*] You stand within his danger, do you  
not?

*Antonio.* Ay, so he says.

*Portia.* Do you confess the bond?

*Antonio.* I do.

*Portia.* Then must the Jew be merciful.

*Shylock.* On what compulsion must I? tell me  
that.

*Portia.* The quality of mercy is not strain'd;  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven 180  
Upon the place beneath: it is twice bless'd;  
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:  
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes  
The thronèd monarch better than his crown;

His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,  
The attribute to awe and majesty,  
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;  
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;  
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,  
It is an attribute to God himself; 190  
And earthly power doth then show likest God's  
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,  
Though justice be thy plea, consider this, —  
That in the course of justice none of us  
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy,  
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much  
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;  
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice  
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant 200  
there.

*Shylock.* My deeds upon my head! I crave the  
law,

The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

*Portia.* Is he not able to discharge the money?

*Bassanio.* Yes, here I tender it for him in the  
court;

Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,  
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,  
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:  
If this will not suffice, it must appear  
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech  
you,

Wrest once the law to your authority: 210  
To do a great right do a little wrong,  
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

*Portia.* It must not be; there is no power in Venice

Can alter a decree establishèd:

'Twill be recorded for a precedent;

And many an error by the same example

Will rush into the state. It cannot be.

*Shylock.* A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!

O wise young judge, how do I honor thee!

*Portia.* I pray you, let me look upon the bond. 220

*Shylock.* Here 'tis, most reverend doctor; here it is.

*Portia.* Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.

*Shylock.* An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven:

Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?

No, not for Venice.

*Portia.* Why, this bond is forfeit;

And lawfully by this the Jew may claim

A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off

Nearest the merchant's heart. — Be merciful;

Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

*Shylock.* When it is paid according to the tenor. 230

It doth appear you are a worthy judge;

You know the law, your exposition

Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,

Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,

Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear

There is no power in the tongue of man

To alter me: I stay here on my bond.



*Antonio.* Most heartily I do beseech the court  
To give the judgment.

*Portia.* Why, then, thus it is: 240  
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

*Shylock.* O noble judge! O excellent young man!

*Portia.* For the intent and purpose of the law  
Hath full relation to the penalty  
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

*Shylock.* 'Tis very true: O wise and upright  
judge!

How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

*Portia.* Therefore lay bare your bosom.

*Shylock.* Ay, his breast:  
So says the bond: — doth it not, noble judge? —  
Nearest his heart: those are the very words.

*Portia.* It is so. Are there balance here to weigh 250  
the flesh?

*Shylock.* I have them ready.

*Portia.* Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your  
charge,  
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

*Shylock.* Is it so nominated in the bond?

*Portia.* It is not so expressed; but what of that?  
'Twere good you do so much for charity.

*Shylock.* I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

*Portia.* Come, merchant, have you anything to  
say?

*Antonio.* But little; I'm arm'd and well pre-  
pared. —

Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well! 260  
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;  
For herein fortune shows herself more kind

Than is her custom: it is still her use  
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,  
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow  
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance  
Of such misery doth she cut me off.

Commend me to your honorable wife:  
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;  
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death; 270  
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge  
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.  
Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,  
And he repents not that he pays your debt;  
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough  
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

*Bassanio.* Antonio, I am married to a wife  
Which is as dear to me as life itself;  
But life itself, my wife, and all the world  
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life; 280  
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all  
Here to this devil to deliver you.

*Portia.* Your wife would give you little thanks  
for that,  
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

*Gratiano.* I have a wife whom I protest, I love;  
I would she were in heaven, so she could  
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

*Nerissa.* 'Tis well you offer it behind her back.  
The wish would make else an unquiet house.

*Shylock.* [*Aside*] These be the Christian hus- 290  
bands.

I have a daughter;  
Would any of the stock of Barrabas

Had been her husband rather than a Christian! —  
We trifle time; I pray thee, púrsue sentence.

*Portia.* A pound of that same merchant's flesh is  
thine;

The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

*Shylock.* Most rightful judge!

*Portia* And you must cut this flesh from off his  
breast;

The law allows it, and the court awards it.

*Shylock.* Most learned judge! A sentence! 300  
Come, prepare.

*Portia.* Tarry a little; there is something else.  
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;  
The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh':  
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;  
But, in the cutting of it, if thou dost shed  
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods  
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate  
Unto the state of Venice.

*Gratiano.* O upright judge! Mark, Jew: O  
learned judge!

*Shylock.* Is that the law?

*Portia.* Thyself shall see the act: 310  
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured  
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

*Gratiano.* O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a  
learned judge!

*Shylock.* I take this offer, then; — pay the bond  
thrice,

And let the Christian go.

*Bassanio.*

Here is the money.

*Portia.* Soft!

The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:  
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

*Gratiano.* O Jew! an upright judge, a learned  
judge!

*Portia.* Therefore prepare thee to cut off the 320  
flesh.

Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less nor more  
But just a pound of flesh: if thou tak'st more  
Or less than a just pound, — be it but so much  
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,  
Or the division of the twentieth part  
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn  
But in the estimation of a hair, —  
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

*Gratiano.* A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!  
Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.

330

*Portia.* Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfei-  
ture.

*Shylock.* Give me my principal, and let me go.

*Bassanio.* I have it ready for thee; here it is.

*Portia.* He hath refused it in the open court;  
He shall have merely justice and his bond.

*Gratiano.* A Daniel, still say I; a second  
Daniel! —

I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

*Shylock.* Shall I not have barely my principal?

*Portia.* Thou shalt have nothing but the forfei-  
ture,

340

To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

*Shylock.* Why, then the devil give him good of it!  
I'll stay no longer question.

*Portia.*

Tarry, Jew:

The law hath yet another hold on you.  
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,  
If it be proved against an alien  
That by direct or indirect attempts  
He seek the life of any citizen,  
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive  
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half  
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;  
And the offender's life lies in the mercy  
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.  
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;  
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,  
That indirectly and directly too  
Thou hast contrived against the very life  
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd  
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.  
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the duke.

350

*Gratiano.* Beg that thou mayst have leave to  
hang thyself:

And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,  
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;  
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

*Duke.* That thou shalt see the difference of our  
spirits,

I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:  
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;  
The other half comes to the general state,  
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

*Portia.* Ay, for the state; not for Antonio.

*Shylock.* Nay, take my life and all; pardon not  
that:

You take my house when you do take the prop



That doth sustain my house; you take my life  
When you do take the means whereby I live.

*Portia.* What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

*Gratiano.* A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.

*Antonio.* So please my lord the duke and all the court

To quit the fine for one half of his goods,

I am content; so he will let me have

The other half in use, to render it,

Upon his death, unto the gentleman

380

That lately stole his daughter;

Two things provided more, — that, for this favor,

He presently become a Christian;

The other, that he do record a gift,

Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,

Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

*Duke.* He shall do this; or else I do recant

The pardon that I late pronouncèd here.

*Portia.* Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

*Shylock.* I am content.

*Portia.* Clerk, draw a deed of gift. 390

*Shylock.* I pray you, give me leave to go from hence:

I am not well; send the deed after me

And I will sign it.

*Duke.* Get thee gone, but do it.

*Gratiano.* In christening, thou shalt have two godfathers;

Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,

To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

[*Exit* SHYLOCK.

*Duke.* Sir, I entreat you with me home to dinner.

*Portia.* I humbly do desire your grace of pardon:

I must away this night toward Padua, 400

And it is meet I presently set forth.

*Duke.* I am sorry that your leisure serves you not. —

Antonio, gratify this gentleman;

For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

[*Exeunt* DUKE and his Train.

*Bassanio.* Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend

Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted

Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,

Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,

We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

*Antonio.* And stand indebted, over and above, 410  
In love and service to you evermore.

*Portia.* He is well paid that is well satisfied:

And I, delivering you, am satisfied,

And therein do account myself well paid;

My mind was never yet more mercenary.

I pray you, know me when we meet again;

I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

*Bassanio.* Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further;

Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,

Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you, 420

Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

*Portia.* You press me far, and therefore I will yield. —

[To ANTONIO] Give me your gloves, I'll wear them  
for your sake; —

[To BASSANIO] And, for your love, I'll take this  
ring from you:

Do not draw back your hand; I'll take no more;  
And you in love shall not deny me this.

*Bassanio.* This ring, good sir, — alas, it is a trifle;  
I will not shame myself to give you this.

*Portia.* I will have nothing else but only this;  
And now methinks I have a mind to it.

*Bassanio.* There's more depends on this than on 430  
the value.

The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,  
And find it out by proclamation;  
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

*Portia.* I see, sir, you are liberal in offers:  
You taught me first to beg; and now methinks  
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.

*Bassanio.* Good sir, this ring was given me by  
my wife;

And when she put it on, she made me vow  
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

*Portia.* That 'scuse serves many men to save 440  
their gifts.

An if your wife be not a mad-woman  
And know how well I have deserved this ring,  
She would not hold out enemy forever  
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

[*Exeunt PORTIA and NERISSA.*]

*Antonio.* My lord Bassanio, let him have the  
ring;

Let his deservings and my love withal

Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

*Bassanio.* Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;  
Give him the ring; and bring him, if thou canst,  
Unto Antonio's house: away! make haste. — 450

[*Exit* GRATIANO.]

Come, you and I will thither presently;  
And in the morning early will we both  
Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II

*Venice. A street.*

*Enter* PORTIA and NERISSA.

*Portia.* Inquire the Jew's house out, give him  
this deed

And let him sign it; we'll away to-night  
And be a day before our husbands home.  
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

*Enter* GRATIANO.

*Gratiano.* Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en:  
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice  
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat  
Your company at dinner.

*Portia* That cannot be:  
His ring I do accept most thankfully;  
And so, I pray you, tell him: furthermore, 10  
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.

*Gratiano.* That will I do.

*Nerissa.* Sir, I would speak with you. —  
[*Aside to* PORTIA] I'll see if I can get my husband's  
ring,

Which I did make him swear to keep forever.

*Portia.* [*Aside to NERISSA*] Thou mayst, I warrant. We shall have old swearing

That they did give the rings away to men;

But we'll outface them, and outswear them too. —

[*Aloud*] Away! make haste; thou know'st where  
I will tarry.

*Nerissa.* Come, good sir; will you show me to  
this house? [*Exeunt.*]



## ACT V

### SCENE I

*Belmont. Avenue to Portia's house.*

*Enter LORENZO and JESSICA.*

*Lorenzo.* The moon shines bright: in such a night  
as this,

When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,  
And they did make no noise, — in such a night  
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls,  
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,  
Where Cressid lay that night.

*Jessica.* In such a night  
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew,  
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,  
And ran dismay'd away.

*Lorenzo.* In such a night  
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand  
Upon the wild sea banks, and waft her love  
To come again to Carthage.

*Jessica.* In such a night  
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs  
That did renew old Æson.

*Lorenzo.* In such a night  
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew,  
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice  
As far as Belmont.

*Jessica.* In such a night

Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,  
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,  
And ne'er a true one.

*Lorenzo.* In such a night 20  
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,  
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

*Jessica.* I would out-night you, did nobody come:  
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

*Enter STEPHANO.*

*Lorenzo.* Who comes so fast in silence of the  
night?

*Stephano.* A friend.

*Lorenzo.* A friend! what friend? your name, I  
pray you, friend?

*Stephano.* Stephano is my name; and I bring  
word

My mistress will before the break of day  
Be here at Belmont; she doth stray about 30  
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays  
For happy wedlock hours.

*Lorenzo.* Who comes with her?

*Stephano.* None but a holy hermit and her maid.  
I pray you, is my master yet return'd?

*Lorenzo.* He is not, nor we have not heard from  
him. —

But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,  
And ceremoniously let us prepare  
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

*Enter LAUNCELOT.*

*Launcelot.* Sola, sola: wo, ha, ho, sola, sola!

*Lorenzo.* Who calls?

40

*Launcelot.* Sola! Did you see master Lorenzo?

Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!

*Lorenzo.* Leave hollaing, man; here.

*Launcelot.* Sola! Where? where?

*Lorenzo.* Here.

*Launcelot.* Tell him there's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news; my master will be here ere morning. *[Exit.*

*Lorenzo.* Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.

And yet no matter: why should we go in? —

50

My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,  
Within the house, your mistress is at hand:  
And bring your music forth into the air. —

*[Exit STEPHANO.]*

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!

Here will we sit and let the sounds of music  
Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night  
Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven  
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st 60

But in his motion like an angel sings,

Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:

Such harmony is in immortal souls;

But whilst this muddy vesture of decay

Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it. —

*Enter Musicians.*

Come, ho, and wake Diana with a hymn;

With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear

And draw her home with music. [*Music.*

*Jessica.* I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

*Lorenzo.* The reason is, your spirits are attentive: 70  
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,  
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,  
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,  
Which is the hot condition of their blood;  
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,  
Or any air of music touch their ears,  
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,  
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze  
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet  
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and  
floods; 80

Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,  
But music for the time doth change his nature.  
The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,  
And his affections dark as Erebus:  
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

*Enter PORTIA and NERISSA at a distance.*

*Portia.* That light we see is burning in my hall.  
How far that little candle throws his beams! 90  
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

*Nerissa.* When the moon shone, we did not see  
the candle.

*Portia.* So doth the greater glory dim the less:  
A substitute shines brightly as a king

Until a king be by; and then his state  
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook  
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!

*Nerissa.* It is your music, madam, of the house.

*Portia.* Nothing is good, I see, without respect;  
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day. 100

*Nerissa.* Silence bestows that virtue on it,  
madam.

*Portia.* The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,  
When neither is attended; and I think  
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,  
When every goose is cackling, would be thought  
No better a musician than the wren.  
How many things by season season'd are  
To their right praise and true perfection! —  
Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion  
And would not be awaked! [*Music ceases.*

*Lorenzo* That is the voice, 110  
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.

*Portia.* He knows me, as the blind man knows  
the cuckoo,  
By the bad voice.

*Lorenzo.* Dear lady, welcome home.

*Portia.* We have been praying for our husbands'  
welfare,  
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.  
Are they return'd?

*Lorenzo.* Madam, they are not yet;  
But there is come a messenger before,  
To signify their coming.

*Portia.* Go in, Nerissa;  
Give order to my servants that they take



No note at all of our being absent hence; — 120  
Nor you, Lorenzo; — Jessica, nor you.

[*A tucket sounds.*]

*Lorenzo.* Your husband is at hand; I hear his  
trumpet:

We are no tell-tales, madam; fear you not.

*Portia.* This night methinks is but the daylight  
sick;

It looks a little paler; 'tis a day,  
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

*Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and  
their Followers.*

*Bassanio.* We should hold day with the Anti-  
podes,

If you would walk in absence of the sun.

*Portia.* Let me give light, but let me not be light;  
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband, 130  
And never be Bassanio so for me;

But God sort all! You are welcome home, my lord.

*Bassanio.* I thank you, madam. Give welcome  
to my friend.

This is the man, this is Antonio,  
To whom I am so infinitely bound.

*Portia.* You should in all sense be much bound  
to him,  
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

*Antonio.* No more than I am well acquitted of.

*Portia.* Sir, you are very welcome to our house:  
It must appear in other ways than words, 140  
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.

[*GRATIANO and NERISSA talk apart.*]

*Gratiano.* By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong;

In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk.

*Portia.* A quarrel, ho, already! what's the matter?

*Gratiano.* About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring  
That she did give me; whose posy was  
For all the world like cutler's poetry  
Upon a knife, 'Love me, and leave me not.'

*Nerissa.* What talk you of the posy, or the value?  
You swore to me, when I did give it you, 150  
That you would wear it till your hour of death;  
And that, it should lie with you in your grave:  
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,  
You should have been respective and have kept it.  
Gave it a judge's clerk! — but well I know  
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.

*Gratiano.* He will, an if he live to be a man.

*Nerissa.* Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

*Gratiano.* Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,  
A kind of boy; a little scrubbèd boy, 160  
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk;  
A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee;  
I could not for my heart deny it him.

*Portia.* You were to blame, I must be plain with  
you,  
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;  
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger  
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.  
I gave my love a ring and made him swear  
Never to part with it; and here he stands;  
I dare be sworn for him, he would not leave it 170

Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth  
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,  
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief;  
An't were to me, I should be mad at it.

*Bassanio.* [*Aside*] Why, I were best to cut my  
left hand off

And swear I lost the ring defending it.

*Gratiano.* My lord Bassanio gave his ring away  
Unto the judge that begg'd it and, indeed,  
Deserved it too; and then the boy, his clerk,  
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine: 180  
And neither man nor master would take aught  
But the two rings.

*Portia.* What ring gave you, my lord?  
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.

*Bassanio.* If I could add a lie unto a fault,  
I would deny it; but you see my finger  
Hath not the ring upon it; it is gone.

*Portia.* Even so void is your false heart of truth.  
By heaven, I will never be your wife  
Until I see the ring.

*Nerissa.* Nor I yours,  
Till I again see mine.

*Bassanio.* Sweet Portia, 190  
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,  
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,  
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,  
And how unwillingly I left the ring,  
When naught would be accepted but the ring,  
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

*Portia.* If you had known the virtue of the ring,  
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,

Or your own honor to contain the ring,  
You would not then have parted with the ring. 200  
What man is there so much unreasonable,  
If you had pleased to have defended it  
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty  
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?  
Nerissa teaches me what to believe;  
I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.

*Bassanio.* No, by mine honor, madam, by my  
soul,

No woman had it, but a civil doctor,  
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me,  
And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him, 210  
And suffer'd him to go displeased away;  
Even he that did uphold the very life  
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet  
lady?

I was enforced to send it after him;  
I was beset with shame and courtesy;  
My honor would not let ingratitude  
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady;  
For, by these blessed candles of the night,  
Had you been there, I think, you would have begg'd  
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor. 220

*Portia.* Let not that doctor e'er come near my  
house:

Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,  
And that which you did swear to keep for me,  
I will become as liberal as you:  
I'll not deny him anything I have.

*Nerissa.* And I his clerk; therefore be well ad-  
vised,

How you do leave me to mine own protection.

*Gratiano.* Well, do you so: let not me take him then;

For, if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.

*Antonio.* I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels. 230

*Portia.* Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.

*Bassanio.* Portia, forgive me this enforcèd wrong;  
And, in the hearing of these many friends,  
I swear to thee, even by thy own fair eyes,  
Wherein I see myself, —

*Portia.* Mark you but that!  
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself:  
In each eye one: — swear by your double self,  
And there's an oath of credit.

*Bassanio.* Nay, but hear me.  
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear  
I never more will break an oath with thee. 240

*Antonio.* I once did lend my body for his wealth;  
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,  
Had quite miscarried: I dare be bound again,  
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord  
Will never more break faith advisedly.

*Portia.* Then you shall be his surety. Give him this;  
And bid him keep it better than the other.

*Antonio.* Here, lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.

*Bassanio.* By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor!

*Portia.* You are all amazed:



Here is a letter; read it at your leisure;  
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:  
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor;  
Nerissa there her clerk: Lorenzo here  
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you  
And even but now return'd; I have not yet  
Enter'd my house. — Antonio, you are welcome;  
And I have better news in store for you  
Than you expect: unseal this letter soon;  
There you shall find three of your argosies 260  
Are richly come to harbor suddenly:  
You shall not know by what strange accident  
I chanced on this letter.

*Antonio.* I am dumb.

*Bassanio.* Were you the doctor, and I knew you  
not?

*Antonio.* Sweet lady, you have given me life and  
living;

For here I read for certain that my ships  
Are safely come to road.

*Portia.* How now, Lorenzo!

My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.

*Nerissa.* Ay, and I'll give them him without a  
fee. —

There do I give to you and Jessica, 270  
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,  
After his death, of all he dies possessed of.

*Lorenzo.* Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way  
Of starvèd people.

*Portia.* It is almost morning,  
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied  
Of these events at full. Let us go in;

And charge us there upon inter'gatories,  
And we will answer all things faithfully.

*Gratiano.* Well, while I live I'll fear no other  
thing

So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

280

[*Exeunt.*

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## DETAILED QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

ACT I. SCENE 1. 1. What weighs on Antonio's mind as the play opens?

2. What does Bassanio want of Antonio?

3. How should "Believe me" in line 76 be read so as to show its difference from the current slang expression?

4. How does the first scene appear to be a key-note for the rest of the play?

ACT I. SCENE 2. 1. What is the cause of Portia's weariness of which she speaks in her opening lines?

2. What does this scene show regarding the circumstances of Portia's life up to this time?

3. What does the scene show regarding Portia's attitude to Bassanio?

ACT I. SCENE 3. 1. What does Bassanio want of Shylock?

2. What is Shylock's attitude toward Antonio?

3. What is the important point in the conclusion of the arrangement for a loan by Shylock to Antonio?

4. What did the Rialto stand for in the mind of the dramatist as shown by this scene and by the first scene of the third act?

5. How do you think the "public place" should be represented on the stage?

6. When did the devil cite Scripture?

7. Why does the scene end with a couplet?

ACT II. SCENE 1. 1. What were the conditions under which Portia's hand was to be obtained in marriage?

2. What do the allusions in Morocco's second speech mean?

3. Why does not Shakespeare have Morocco choose a casket in this scene?

ACT II. SCENE 2. 1. What light does this scene throw on the character of Shylock?

2. What does the scene show about Bassanio's plans?

3. How do you account for the shiftings from prose to verse?

4. What is the author's purpose in including the clown Launcelot among the characters of the play?

5. What does Launcelot do when he says, "You may tell every finger I have with my ribs"?

ACT II. SCENE 3. 1. What additional information about the character of Shylock do you glean from this scene?

2. What sort of room would you have on the stage here?

ACT II. SCENE 4. 1. What does the scene show about Lorenzo's plans?

2. What idea have you of a Venetian masque?

ACT II. SCENE 5. 1. What traits does Shylock show while he talks to Jessica here?

2. What meaning do you get from Launcelot's speeches?

ACT II. SCENE 6. 1. What sort of person does Gratiano appear to be?

2. What is Jessica planning to do?

3. In what respects are her actions like the action of the Israelites when they left Egypt?

ACT II. SCENE 7. 1. Why did Morocco choose the golden casket?

2. What harm does the love of gold do in this play?

3. What is the difference between proper self-appreciation and conceit?

4. What is there to show that other persons before Morocco had tried to make the right choice?

5. Did Portia know which casket contained her picture?

ACT II. SCENE 8. 1. What is the significance of Salarino's saying that he had heard of the wreck of a richly laden merchant vessel?

2. How much time has elapsed since the signing of the bond?

3. What are the relations between Antonio and Bassanio as evidenced by this scene?

ACT II. SCENE 9. 1. To what "election" does Arragon come?

2. What do you think of the Prince of Arragon?

3. What justification can you give for the reasoning that led Arragon to choose the silver casket?

4. Why is the "schedule" in a different verse form from that usual in the play?



5. What opinion have you formed of Portia from her deportment while the ceremony of the choosing of the caskets by Morocco and Arragon has been going on?

ACT III. SCENE 1. 1. How does it come about that Shylock is alternately elated and depressed during this scene?

2. Are your sympathies aroused for Shylock?

3. What is the substance of Shylock's speech that begins with the phrase, "To bait fish withal"?

4. How do Salanio and Salarino differ from each other and from other characters in the play? Do these men seem as real, flesh and blood people as other persons of the drama?

5. How does this scene prepare you for something that is to follow?

ACT III. SCENE 2. 1. What led Bassanio to choose the leaden casket?

2. Under what circumstances do boys and girls nowadays have to make choices corresponding in any respects with Bassanio's choice?

3. What is there to admire in Portia's words and conduct?

4. Who sings the song?

5. What help did the song give to Bassanio?

6. Why did Portia give Bassanio a ring?

7. What is the dramatic use of the letter that Bassanio received?

8. What two leading characters of the play are not on the stage during this scene?

9. After this scene, how should the play in your opinion be concluded?

10. Why is not the marriage performed on the stage?

ACT III. SCENE 3. 1. Why does the dramatist have Shylock keep saying, "I'll have my bond"?

2. What silent person is on the stage in this scene?

3. Why does he not take part in the conversation?

4. What do you find to praise in Antonio's manner?

ACT III. SCENE 4. 1. What was Portia's plan?

2. How far was Belmont from Venice?

3. How does the author try to make the carrying out of the plan seem plausible?

4. What speech of Portia's sounds something like a speech of Rosalind's in *As You Like It*?

5. Has Portia seemed to you to grow in womanliness as the story has developed?

ACT III. SCENE 5. 1. Which interest seems to you the stronger in the third act — the matter of the caskets or the matter of the loan?

2. Of what dramatic use is the fifth scene of the act?

3. Which of the three characters of the scene shows the keenest wit?

ACT IV. SCENE 1. 1. Where on the stage would you place the characters that take part in this scene? [Draw a sketch showing the position of each.]

2. What gestures or motions would be appropriate for each character as determined by the words spoken?

3. As if you were a spectator, tell just what happened in the court of justice.

4. What humorous incidents occurred during this long scene?

5. What improbabilities do you detect?

6. What was the sentence pronounced by Portia on Shylock?

7. In what respect does the sentence seem to you unjust?

8. What names do various characters of the play call Shylock? Which of these are in your opinion undeserved by him?

9. Which speech of Portia's and which speech of Antonio's do you find most pleasing in this scene? Why pleasing?

10. How are love and revenge contrasted in the scene?

11. What legal right had Portia to be a lawyer in the play?

ACT IV. SCENE 2. 1. Why is the giving of the rings put here in a scene by itself?

2. Why does not the play end with the decision in the court of justice?

3. Was Bassanio right in giving the ring to the lawyer?

ACT V. SCENE 1. 1. Describe a moonlight night at Belmont.

2. How does this scene give a sense of calm repose to the conclusion of the story?

3. What beautiful, poetic effects would be lost if this scene were not included in the play?

4. What sprightly fun comes at the end of the play?

5. Which characters of the play "lived happily ever after"?

## COMMENTS, TOPICS, AND GENERAL QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

DRAMATIC ELEMENT. 1. (a) What is the meaning of each of the following: — *literature, poetry, drama, and comedy*?

(b) Discuss *The Merchant of Venice* as a comedy.

(c) What do you know about plays and theaters?

(d) What has the theater meant to you up to this time?

2. (a) Sir Henry Irving took in as gross receipts about \$3,500,000 from performances of Shakespearian plays. How do you account for the continuing popularity of Shakespeare's plays?

(b) What disadvantages has a moving picture presentation of *The Merchant of Venice* in comparison with a regular theatrical performance? What advantages?

(c) What gain is there through the presentation of the story of *The Merchant of Venice* in the form of a play rather than in the form of a novel?

3. A theatrical manager lately offered to buy good plays preceded by interesting 250-word synopses. Write for *The Merchant of Venice* such an interesting synopsis that it would be likely to make a manager want to read the play itself.

4. Who is the best Portia playing this season? The best Shylock? Whom have you seen taking these parts? Why does the leading actor select the part of Shylock for himself?

5. Mention an interesting play written by one of the following Elizabethan dramatists: Marlowe, Lyly, Peele, Kyd, Greene, Lodge, Jonson, Chapman, Dekker, Middleton, Heywood, Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, and Webster.

6. Richard Mansfield made Shylock "a creature of intense hatred, an instrument of malignant revenge for personal injury." Criticize this ideal of Shylock.

7. Mansfield as Shylock "wore a bristly, grizzled beard; sparse, iron-gray hair curled about his ears and neck; his eyes were keen and restless; there were the deep lines of an implacable nature written on his visage. About his form hung the long skirts of his dull-brown gaberdine." How does this idea of Shylock's appearance accord with your own?

8. What part of the play would you like to take? Reasons.

9. If you were stage manager for an amateur performance of the play, what arrangements would you make for scenery and costumes?

10. Make note of several passages that are so good as poetry or so interesting as comedy that you think they deserve to be read aloud or spoken from memory. What scenes do you enjoy most when they are informally presented in the class room under the direction of one of the pupils for the special entertainment of the teacher and the members of the class who are not assigned parts?

11. Where is this play sometimes presented now very much as it was in Shakespeare's time?

12. What scenes could be omitted without spoiling the onward action of the story?

THE ENGLISH USED. 13. In what respects does Shakespeare's grammatical standard seem to you different from your own grammatical standard? For example, would you say, "there *be* land-rats and water-rats"? Point out as many instances as you can where your way of saying a thing would be different from that in the play.

14. In what respects does Shakespeare's rhetorical standard seem less strict than yours? For instance, would you say, "As *they* fly by *them* with their woven wings," when the *they* refers to argosies and the *them* refers to traffickers?

15. In what respects does Shakespeare's use of words differ from yours? Give illustrations of his use of words in senses different from the meanings with which you are acquainted. For instance, look at the word *still* in line 136 of Act I, Scene 1.

16. Make a glossary containing twenty-five words that either seem to you in the play to be used in peculiar senses or else seem strange and difficult themselves. Include, for example, such words as these of the first scene: *argosies*, *traffickers*, *alabaster*, *gudgeon*, *presages*. Be sure to arrange them in strict alphabetical order, as a glossary should be arranged, and give as clear, crisp definitions as you can.

17. Note the allusions to classical stories in such lines as, "Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable," where the speaker refers to *Nestor* as the oldest and gravest of the Greeks who took part in the Trojan war — any dictionary of proper names will show you this; "Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand," where the reference is to the old story of the golden fleece — Belmont, the home of the rich heiress, is compared with Colchos, the land where the golden fleece was kept; "Should fall as *Jacob's* hire," where the speaker is making use of a reference to a story in the Bible; "Where *Phæbus*' fire scarce thaws the icicle," where the word *Phæbus* refers



to the sun, according to a classical story which can easily be found in any book of classical mythology, like Gayley's valuable work. What other classical allusions do you find in the play?

18. Give several illustrations of verbal embroidery, that is, figurative expressions, in the third act.

19. Using the same kind of versification predominant in the play, compose a speech to be spoken by Portia in place of one of her speeches of the fourth act.

CONTENTS OF THE PLAY. 20. (a) Enumerate the characters concerned in the first main plot of the play; the second main plot.

(b) Name two characteristics of each of the following persons of the drama, and explain how each trait appears from the words or actions, or from both the words and actions, of the character: Antonio, Shylock, Bassanio, Portia, Lorenzo, Jessica, Gratiano, Nerissa, and Launcelot.

(c) Can you name two more essential characteristics for Shylock than these two — miserliness and revengefulness?

21. Group the characters in divisions according to some scheme of your own.

22. Portia has been called mentally superior to every other character in the play. Do you consider her so? Reasons.

23. Why would it be fair or unfair to call Bassanio a fortune-hunting adventurer?

24. What good word can you say for Shylock?

25. Of the three love stories in the play, which one illustrates the old adage, "The course of true love never runs smooth"?

26. Would you call either revenge or justice the central idea or theme of the whole play? If neither of these satisfies you, what do you consider to be the theme?

27. As an exercise in the valuation of words and ideas, reduce the action of the entire play to a concise summary of one hundred words.

28. Summarize each plot in two hundred words.

29. Comment on this as a summary of one plot: "The borrowing of a sum of money by a wealthy merchant of Venice to equip a young friend for the courtship of a rich and beautiful lady." Compare this kind of summary with the sort given in the Introduction, page xv.

30. The winning of an heiress by means of a choice of caskets.

31. Pathos in the play.

32. Portia's suitors.

33. Describe Portia.

34. The clown's part.



35. Write a topical outline for a narrative of the ring story.
36. Gobboisms.
37. Puns in the play.
38. Imaginative word-picture of the scene at the moment when Bassanio chose the right casket.
39. Make a table showing eight different days on which events of the play happen, and estimate the intervals of time that probably elapse between some of these days.
40. Paraphrase the quality of mercy speech.
41. Describe what could have been seen in the court of justice at the most exciting moment of the trial.
42. From the play, what do you learn about Venice? About Belmont?
43. In what particulars do you consider the first act a good introduction for the play?
44. What is the artistic use of the fifth act?
45. What debatable propositions can you frame based on the play?
46. Why did Shakespeare have Morocco ready to choose a casket in the first scene of the second act, and then make the audience wait till the seventh scene before the showing of the actual selection of the gold casket by Morocco?
47. Copy the expressions or the short detached passages that you have seen or heard quoted from this play.
48. Copy two longer selections, each of ten or more consecutive lines, that would be worth committing to memory. Learn one of these selections.
49. Comment on the following opinion of the play: "The great lesson of life is taught, and the last act of the play opens with the Jew and the Gentile, representing any two forms of bitter antagonism, in embrace of love under the calm expanse of heaven." (See page xiv, of Introduction.)
50. What great lesson of life do you discover in the play?

# PROGRAM OF DRAMATIC ENTERTAINMENT

The Merchant of Venice  
by  
William Shakespeare  
as enacted by  
The 2A Latin Boys in English Class  
January, 1914  
at the  
Richmond Hill High School

## SCENE 1

From page 7, Line 119. *Antonio.* Well, tell me now, what lady  
is the same . . .

Through page 9, Line 185. *Antonio.* And I no question make,  
to have it at my trust or for my sake.

## SCENE 2

From page 14, Line 1. *Shylock.* Three thousand ducats, —  
well . . .

Through page 20, Line 176. *Antonio.* My ships come home a  
month before the day.

## SCENE 3

From page 51, Line 1. *Portia.* I pray you, tarry . . .

Through page 62, Line 317. *Portia.* O love, dispatch all busi-  
ness, and be gone.

## SCENE 4

From page 75, Line 116. *Duke.* Came you from Padua, from  
Bellario . . .

Through page 86, Line 417. *Portia.* I wish you well, and so  
I take my leave.

## NOTES BY THE COACH

A committee of five was selected by the class three weeks before  
the play was given. A chairman, a secretary, and a coach, all

of whom were members of the student committee, were appointed by the committee.

It was decided that by the use of the foregoing selected portions of the play the main parts of the story could be given in a single period of forty minutes.

The cast of the characters and the list of scenes to be presented were printed on the board before the beginning of the regular recitation period that had been assigned by the teacher for this entertainment.

The introduction to the play and the description of the scenes were given by the coach. [Raymond Browne was the coach, and Howard Malmar was the chairman. — EDITOR.]

The properties needed were:

A big knife [for Shylock].

Three caskets [colored paste-board boxes served for these].

A scroll.

A letter.

The general directions given to the actors by the coach were:

Keep your self-possession.

Face the audience, but do not seem to be looking at individuals.

Speak distinctly so that the audience can understand what you say.

Imagine yourself to be the person acting, and act as if you were.

Before the first scene the coach said:

Doctor Gaston and Class-mates, — The dramatic committee selected by the class will present to you *The Merchant of Venice*. The cast of characters and the scenes to be presented are on the black-board. The students who present this play this afternoon wish me to say that their aim is to give you a boys' interpretation of the old play by William Shakespeare. The costumes you will see have not arrived; the properties are scarce. Imagine for the first scene a public park, surrounded by noble Venetian houses of imposing appearance, a marble fountain playing in the centre.

Before the second, third, and fourth scenes the coach spoke as follows:

*Scene 2.* A quiet place upon the Rialto island. A part of the marble structure at the side of the bridge going over the canal forms a pleasing background.

*Scene 3.* A sumptuous apartment in Portia's home. Rich in draperies and furnishings, it is a fitting setting for the game of chance to be played there, in which the prize is the beautiful

Portia herself. In this room are three caskets; one gold, one silver, and one lead. In one of these is a portrait of Portia. Whichever one of Portia's suitors chooses this casket may claim Portia for his bride. The golden and silver ones have already been chosen without success by other suitors. Now comes Bassanio to try his fortune. He does not know, of course, which casket is the lucky one, and his choice is shown in this scene.

*Scene 4.* The Venetian court. A long hall of stone, dimly lighted by large stained-glass windows. There is a high desk for the judge, and there are several smaller ones for other dignitaries. Near this desk is the prisoner's box. It is in this court that Antonio, the Merchant of Venice, is to be tried for default of payment of the bond. The Jew, Shylock, has dropped his mask of pretended merriment, and now demands the pound of flesh stipulated in the bond.

## GLOSSARY

**Alcides**, another name for Hercules.

**Andrew**, name given to a large ship that was used for commerce.

**argosies**, large merchant ships.

**baned**, poisoned.

**'bated**, reduced, lowered.

**burghers**, freemen of a burgh or borough; citizens.

**cater-cousins**, intimate friends.

**cerecloth**, cloth dipped in melted wax and used for wrapping a dead body.

**Charybdis**, a dangerous whirlpool on the Sicilian coast, opposite Scylla; personified as a female monster.

**Colchos**, a mythical land east of the Black Sea to which Jason went in quest of the golden fleece. Also called Colchis.

**commends**, compliments, greetings.

**compromised**, bound by an agreement.

**continent**, that which holds or contains.

**Cressid**, a beautiful young Trojan woman, faithless to her lover, Troilus.

**Cupid**, the god of love. He was the son of Venus.

**Dardanian wives**, Trojan women.

**Diana**, Roman goddess of motherhood.

**Dido**, queen of Carthage, deserted by Æneas. See Virgil's *Æneid*.

**doit**, coin of little value.

**dulcet**, sweet to the ear.

**dumb-show**, pantomime; a dramatic representation with action but no talking.

**eanlings**, newborn lambs.

**eke**, increase, extend.

**Endymion**, a young shepherd loved by the moon goddess, who caressed him while he was in an enchanted sleep.

**Erebus**, gloomy dark space through which souls pass to Hades. — Greek mythology.

**fall**, let fall, give birth to.

**fear'd**, caused to fear.

**flats**, shallows, shoals. In the United States, the term is now



applied to the shallows at the mouth of the St. Clair River, where it empties into Lake St. Clair; these shallow places are called "The Flats."

**frutify**, perhaps for *certify*. Launcelot has a knack for getting words twisted.

**gaberdine**, coarse loose coat.

**gear**, affair, business.

**Goodwins**, shallows east of southern England.

**gramercy**, a word expressing surprise or thanks.

**guarded**, ornamented with lace.

**gudgeon**, small fish of little value.

**habit**, dress.

**Hercules**, Greek hero, celebrated for his strength.

**Hyrcanian deserts**, region south of the Caspian Sea.

**Janus**, Roman god of gates and doors; represented with two opposite faces.

**Jasons**, an allusion to the story of Jason who in Greek mythology won the golden fleece.

**knapped**, nibbled or gnawed.

**Lichas**, page of Hercules.

**magnificoes**, chief men of Venice.

**mantle**, take on a covering, as of froth or scum; about the same as *cream*, in the same line of the play.

**Mars**, the god of war.

**Medea**, an enchantress, in Greek mythology. She helped Jason to win the golden fleece and later restored his aged father, Aeson, to youthful strength by putting juices of magic herbs in his veins.

**mere**, nothing other or less than; unqualified.

**Midas**, an ancient king, who in Greek mythology asked that everything he touched might be turned to gold but who asked that this power might be taken away from him when he found that his food turned to gold.

**moe**, more.

**moiety**, a half or an indefinite part.

**Nazarite**, Jesus, who drove the evil spirits into the herd of swine. See *Matthew* 8: 32. Nazarite strictly means a man who does not cut his hair. Jesus is now called a *Nazarene*, or Man of Nazareth.

**Nestor**, wise old hero of the Trojan war. See Homer's *Odyssey*.

**Orpheus**, a Thracian musician who, according to old mythology, had the power of charming beasts and making rocks and trees move to the sound of his lyre.

- ostent, air, manner.  
 pageants, movable structures on which plays were performed in the streets; often in the shape of towers, castles, or ships.  
 patch, jester, domestic fool.  
 patines, plates.  
 peize, weigh down, retard, delay.  
 pied, with large blotches of two or more colors; parti-colored, spotted.  
 port, bearing, demeanor.  
 posy, motto inscribed on a ring.  
 presages, foretells, predicts.  
 presently, immediately, at once.  
 prevented, anticipated.  
 publican, collector of toll.  
 Pythagoras, a Greek philosopher who believed in the transmigration of souls.  
 quiring, singing in concert, as a choir.  
 rasher, thin slice of bacon or ham.  
 regreets, greetings.  
 rheum, discharge from nose of person having a cold.  
 Rialto, the Venetian island where "merchants most do congregate," now the name of a bridge over the Grand Canal in Venice.  
 scanted, limited.  
 scrubbed, stunted, scrubby.  
 scruple, a small weight, 20 grains.  
 Scylla, a dangerous rock on the Italian coast; personified as a sea monster encircled by barking dogs.  
 sensible, tangible, perceptible to the senses.  
 Sibylla, sibyl; a prophetess who wanted to live for many years.  
 signiors, lords, fine gentlemen.  
 sonties, sanctity.  
 Sophy, Persian emperor; derived from *soffi*, wise man.  
 sort, arrange, dispose.  
 stead, help.  
 still, always, continually.  
 strange, reserved, distant in bearing or manner.  
 Thisbe, a Babylonian maiden who when going to meet her lover, Pyramus, saw a lion that had been eating an ox. Thisbe fled, leaving her veil behind. When Pyramus came to the meeting place and saw the lion with the veil in his bloody mouth, he killed himself. Then Thisbe came back, and, seeing Pyramus dead, killed herself also. Chaucer tells the story in his *Legende of*

*Goode Women.* See also Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

tranect, ferry.

Troilus, son of Priam of Troy; an allusion to a good story told by Shakespeare in his play, *Troilus and Cressida*, and by Chaucer in his poem, *Troilus and Cryseyde*.

usance, interest, usury.

vailing, letting down.

Venus' pigeons, doves that drew the chariot of Venus, the goddess of love.

virgin tribute, an allusion to the rescue by Hercules of a young Trojan woman who had been chained by her father to a rock, to be devoured by a sea monster, as a tribute to Neptune, the god of the sea.

waft, wafted.

want'wit, dunce, simpleton.

wauling, wailing, howling, mewling. The *Variorum* reads "woolen"; sometimes bagpipes had a woolen covering.

weeping philosopher, Heraclitus, who was a melancholy Greek philosopher accustomed to mourn over the follies of mankind.

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